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GCC reviews security, boycott

DUBAI (R) - Gull Arab leaders held talks on Tuesday on security arrangements in the region hut did not finalise plans to triple a joint defence force, officials said. The leaders also discussed the security defence force, otherals said. "The leaders also discussed the security issue from all its angles including developing the Perinsula Shield joint-force)." Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary General Sheikh Fahim Ben Sultan Al Qasimi said after talks in Riyadh, Sheikh Fahim said the issue had not been finally approved, the Emirates News Agency (WAM) quoted him as saying. The GCC leaders discussed the Arab boycott of Israel and the possibility of maintaining it; sources at the 14th summit said. A decision by the leaders on whether to maintain the senctions would be appropried at the reconstruction. whether to maintain the sanctions would be announced at the proper time, the Omani News Agency quoted Sheikh Fahim as saying. He provided no other details. But summit sources said GCC foreign ministers had recommended their countries abide by an Arab League decision stating that the lifting of the embargo depended on a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement.



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المُلْتَيَتَ، لِلأَرْوَنِيَتَ، ROYAL JORDANIAN (المُلْتِيَتَ لِلأَرُونِيَتِ،

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AMMAN WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1993, RAGAB 9, 1414

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King, Assad exchange views

AMMAN (Petra) - His Majesty King Hussein Tues-day contacted Syrian President Hafez Al Assad over the phone and exchanged views with him on various international and regional issues, particularly the latest developments in the Middle East

The two leaders stressed the need for Jordanian-Syrian coordination to sunify positions vis-a-vis the peace process in the context of support for a unified Arab position and Arab causes and rights, the Jordan News Agency, Pet-

In Damascus, meanwhile, President Assad and Syrian

Mr. Hrawi and Mr. Assad were co-chairing the first session of the two countries' joint upreme council.

Also present were Syrian

Two Shiite guerrillas

SIDON (AFP) - Two guerrillas from the Shote militia Amal were killed Monday in firefights with Israeli soldiers and their surrogates the South Lebanon Army (SLA), Amal said in a statement here. Pro-Syrian Amal fighters attacked an SLA position at Alman Shumariye, to the centre of the Israeli "security zone" in southern Lebanon, with automatie weapons, anti-tank rockets and mortars, Amal said, triggering a firefight. An SLA spokesman had earlier said two of its men were hurt in an engagement at Tallus in the western sector of the "security Israel on Sunday attacked the Hizbollah militia in southern Lebanon.

Hungarian parliament approves

plus one vote) majority, or 192 'yes" votes in the 385-strong legislature.

with Britain

WASHINGTON (AFP) -The Libyans accused of blowing up a U.S. airliner: over Scotland five years ago must be brought to justice. President Bill Clinton said Tuesday at a groundbreaking for a memorial to the 270 victims. "On this day five years ago Pan Am Flight 103 was torn from the sky over the hills of Lockerbie, Scotland," Mr. Cboton said. 'Our nation will never stop pursuing justice against those who caused it," Mr. Clinton

Israel, PLO meet again amid reports of compromise deal

PARIS (Agencies) - Israel and Palestinian negotiators were to meet in Paris late Tuesday for talks to overcome differences blocking Palesti-nian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

French foreign ministry spokesman Richard Duque, quashing earlier reports the talks might be held outside the capital, told reporters: "I definitely say Paris.

The Palestinian delegation was headed by Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) **Executive Committee member** Yaser Abed Rabbo who said before leaving Tunis that his Israeli counterpart would be Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and the talks would probably last a day.

Reporters were harred from Paris' Orly airport VIP lounge when Mr. Ahed Rabbo and three aides arrived to be whisked away by police to an undisclosed destination. Sources close to the talks

said Mr. Peres would arrive in the late evening and a first meeting might not begin he-fore 11 p.m. (2200 GMT). Palestinian and diplomatic

sources said in Tunis the PLO

and Israel had reached a basis

for compromise on controlling border crossings, one of the toughest obstacles in the negotiations. But they emphasised

that there were still problems.

fat has already approved a

border crossings, the diplomats

This compromise was reached during secret weekend talks in Sarpsborg, Norway, one of the diplomats said. Mr. Arafat endorsed it Monday after the PLO team returned to their Tunis headquarters, the diplomat said.

The PLO-Israeli areas of agreement and disagreement at the weekend meeting were summarised in a four-page paper written in English and dated Sunday. It bore no signatures. The first section dealt with border crossings, the second with Jericho.

According to the paper, the PLO and Israel would share control at the two main crossings which link the Gaza Strip to Egypt and Jericho to Jordan. These are the areas where a gradual turnover of control from Israel to the Palestinians is supposed to start, in accordance with the Sept. 13 peace accord the two sides signed in

Washington. The four-page paper, which was seen by an Associated Press reporter, gives Israel full responsibility for the external security of the West Bank and Gaza during an interim period. But it gives Palestinian police a wide range of responsibilities at the crossing points. No time frame was providing for the

arrangement Mr. Abed Rabbo, who the weekend talks in Norway, confirmed the authenticity of the paper.

But he added: "It only summerises points of agreements and disagreements." The diplomats and the paper said the key differences be-

tween Israel and the PLO centre on how much land Israel would relinquish to Palestinian control around Jericho. The PLO waots 210 square kilometres, Israel only wants to give up 90 square kilometres. The diplomats said the PLO

and Israel agreed to create a mechanism to facilitate the entry and exit of people to Gaza and Jericho.

According to the diplomats and the four-page paper, this is how the border crossing would operate:

- Palestinians from Gaza and the West Bank and Palestinian visitors to the two zones would pass through a PLO police control point before entering an Israeli check point. - While Palestinian travelers are at the PLO checkpoint Israeli police would monitor them and their travel documents with electronic

- The Israelis would have the right to veto entry or exit. They could also order physical searches at random.

(Continued on page 10)



Rescue teams sift through the rubble on Tuesday for victims of Monday's explosion at the Falange Party headquarters in Beirut (AFP photo)

Falange HQ blast 'setback for Lebanon'

BEIRUT (Agencies) - A hoge hlast that wrecked the Falange Party headquarters in Beirut, killing three people and wounding 130, is a setback to Lebanon's attempts to erase the scars of civil war, analysts said Tuesday.

They said it had shaken the country's image as a safe haven for international and Arah iovestment - a theme the governmeot has been pushing by stressing that the civil war of 1975 to 1990 is over for good.

The 250 kilogramme bomh, placed in a truck left in wasteland just behind the two-storey building in east Beirnt's Saifi district, blew up shortly after nightfall on Monday as the right-wiog party's polithuro was in its weekly meeting.

"This hlast is a shock and will have repercussions on the political, economic and social situation in Lehanon," said one economic analyst who requested anooymity.

"Trust in Lehanon, which was undergoing repair, will be shaken, especially as to the security situation, according to which investors decide whether or not to invest," he said.

The blast, which brought down the ceiling of the meeting room, killed Falange politburo member Antoine Baaklini and a civilian outside the huilding. Rescuers resumed clearing

rubble oo Tuesday and found a dead two-mooth-old infant buried under the ruins of a nearby house.

We thought we bad moved from destruction to rehuilding.... the government promised the war had ended ... but everything that was said, and everything we thought and believed, evaporated yesterday with the Falange house bomb," said the oewspaper Al

The killer hlast came almost (Continued on page 5)

IAF in disarray after resignations

By Mariam M. Shahin Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN - A rift between hawks and doves within the Islamic Action Front (IAF) has resulted in the resignation of six members of the Front's executive committee, threatening to split the best organised and most powerful

political party in Jordan. Led by Ziad Abu Ghanimeh a maverick hawk and former Muslim Brotherhood spokesman, six of the IAF's 17-member executive committee members resigned Monday night after a row hroke out following Mr. Ahu Ghanimeh's insistence that up to 300 new Muslim Brotherhood members be admitted into the IAF prior to the election of a 120member consultative council, Shura, scheduled for Friday.

The IAF, the Muslim Brotherhood's political arm. was officially created after political parties were legalised in late 1992.

"I resigned from the executive committee after insults were hurled at me because of my insistence that up to 300 new and qualified members be admitted into the IAF," Mr. Ahu Ghanimeh told the Jordan Times Tuesday.

According to Mr. Ahu Ghanimeh seven of the 12 members of the executive committee who attended the Monday meeting were in favour of admitting new

memhers into the 2,000member party.

"We were seven in favour and five against. When the nay sayers saw they would lose they started insulting me and walked out of the meet-Mr. Ahu Ghanimeh IAF insiders say the 300

would-he party members are "young and radical" compared to the present urbane, politically sensitised members who have traditionally held the upper hand in the IAF and Muslim Brotherhood leadership in Jordan.

IAF Secretary General Ishak Farhan adjourned Monday's meeting before a vote was taken on the proposed inclusion of new members. Mr. Abu Ghanimeh called Mr. Farhan's decision "undemocratic."

IAF observers say that the new members could have tipped the balance in favour of more hardline elements withio the Brotherhood movement and the IAF. After an IAF executive

committee meeting Tuesday attended by at least one of those who resigned, the party issued a press release in which it absolved itself of any wrong-doing and applauded its own decision to delay the acceptance of the 200 candidates in question. "There is no reason for us

to accept so many new mem-(Continued on page 10)

Settlers' number up, but many may quit

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — The Jewish settlement population in the occupied territories grew hy 7.3 per cent this year, a settler group said Tuesday, but there are indications of a potential shift in the opposite direction.

A lawmaker with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rahin's Labour Party said dozens were interested in moving out hecause of plans for Palestinian autonomy. Newspapers said thousands have been putting their homes on the market.

The West Bank and Gaza settlement council said that as of Dec. 15, the Jewish population in these areas stood at 136,415 or 7.3 per cent higher than last year's figure of Government officials put the

number at 120,000. Officials note that throughout Israel municipal authorities inflate the figures in a bid for more aid, particularly in the settlements where numbers are linked to the importance of their continued existence.

The council statement added that since the start of the uprising in December 1987, the settlement population had risen 120 per cent, hasing their figures on city tax records.

Most of the growth was in bedroom communities around Jerusalem such as Maalem Adumim the largest settlement with 19,870, up from 16,757 a year ago. Some settlements more distant from main cities registered a drop. Kiryat-Arbanear Hehron - site of repeated fatal clashes between Arabs and Jews-dropped to 5.900 from 6,527 in 1992.

In all Israel has built 144

Israel's draft hudget for 1994 calls for an additional \$7 million outlay for settlements on the Golan Heights, president of the settlements council, told Israel Radio that the increase would allow 3,000 more Israelis to move to the Golan Heights before the next legisla-

tive elections in 1996.
"This increase which is mainly for the construction hudget is particularly significant now," Mr. Wollman said. referring to negotiations with Syria over an Israeli withdrawal from the strategic heights in exchange for peace.

He did not disclose the total Golan hudget figure, but a housing ministry spokesman said the increase was negligible and that it should not be accorded any political signifi-

Finance Minister Avraham Shohat in June advised parliament against making long-term investments on the Golan

Some 12,000 Israelis live on the Golan in 33 settlements alongside 16,000 Druze resi-

The settler pnpulation growth came in the West Bank and Gaza despite Prime Minister Yitzhak Rahin's decision in 1992 to cut government subsidies and other incentives and to freeze construction in the occupied territories because of peace talks.

Lahour legislator Yossi Kaitz said he has received dozens of appeals lately from settlers in less religiously fervent areas who are interested. in receiving government aid to move back into Israel. In all; he estimated as many as half the settlers may be interested in leaving the occupied areas during autonomy.

Mr. Katz introduced a bill on Dec. 6 to compensate settiers who want to leave. The measure does not provide any cost estimates, leaving that to the government and parliament finance committee to de-

(Continued on page 5)

Zhirinovsky party wants power share

MOSCOW (Agencies) Vladimir Zhirinovsky's ultranationalist Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) said Tuesday it wanted a governmental role. raising the stakes in the game of political cat and mouse with President Boris Yeltsin.

Top party official Alexei Mitrofanov told journalists the LDP aimed to participate in Russia's new government and had already held talks with Kremlin representatives. His comments, confirming

earlier news agency reports of behind-the-scenes negotiations between the two sides, came hours after Mr. Yeltsin described massive LDP gains in the Dec. I2 legislative elections as nothing more than a protest by voters impoverished by economic reform.

Mr. Mitrofanov said. "There have been talks between the Liberal Democratic Party and highly-placed indi-viduals in (Yeltsin's) presidential team.

LDP leaders had met Tuesday to discuss "the prospect of entering government and the promotion of (our) candidates to the most senior positions in the duma" or lower parliamentary house, he added.

Mr. Mitrofanov said he favoured LDP participation in government, citing the youth ministry as a potential portfolio for the party, while a possible LDP target in the Duma was the post of first deputy speaker, he added.

Negotiations are under way (but) that depends on the president," said Mitrofanov, who is responsible for communication and foreign affairs within the LDP's self-declared "shadow cahinet.

The LDP has taken about 65 of the 450 seats in the Duma, gains which have raised fears throughout the world of a nascent grassroots upsurge in aggressive Russian nationalism, and presented the pro-Yeltsin camp with an electoral sethack it knows it cannot

Mr. Yeltsin told the ITAR-TASS agency that it was Russia's "many poor people" who had voted for the LDP. "They voted not for its lead-

er or its programme, but in protest against poverty." the Russian president said. Mr. Yeltsin's remarks served as a warning to his reformist administration to take steps to

ease widespread economic hardship. But they were also aimed at minimising Mr. Zhirinovsky's personal political clout and erecting early defences to limit the LDP's sphere of influence.

Interfax news agency earlier reported that Mr. Zhirinovsky held talks late Monday with Nikolai Medvedev, the administration official in charge of relations with Russia's regions and territories whose role at the Kremlin seems to be grow-

ing in importance. Mr. Medvedev declined to give details on the subject of the talks, Interfax said, while the Kremlin press service refused to confirm or deny whether the meeting had taken

DO YOU TASTE CHOCOLATE WHEN YOU BUY IT? Patchi Sweifich, Yaish Commercial Centre, Opposite Arab Bank Tell. 825881 Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

President Elias Hrawi held

Prime Minister Mahmoud Al Zoubi and Parliament Speaker Abdel Qudder Quddonra, Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri.

killed in Lebanon

cabinet BUDAPEST (AFP) .— The . Hungarian parliament Tuesday accepted former Interior Minister Peter Boross as prime minister, and adopted his government programme with a 201 to 152 majority and five abstentions. Mr. Boross, 65, is to replace Jozsef Antall, who died Dec. 12 at age 61 of heart failure following lengthy treatment of lymphatic gland cancer. The vote, broadcast live on Hungarian television. needed a single (50 per cent

Sinn Fein seeks talks

BELFAST (R) — The president of the Irish Republican Army's (IRA) political wing called Tuesday for direct talks with Britain and Ireland on what he called cootradictions in every element of their Northern Ireland peace plan. "There is a need for direction and unconditional dialogue if we are to move forward on all these issues," Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams told his first news conference since the plan was unveiled last Wednesday. Mr. Adams complained of ambiguities "on every issue involved," in the package of constitutional principles British Prime Minister John Major and his Irish counterpart Albert Reynolds launched six days ago.

Lockerble attackers must be brought to justice — Clinton

ruins of Petra church quities and financed by a By Suhair Obeidat grant from the United States Special to the Jordan Times Agency for International Development (USAID).

Ancient scrolls found near

AMMAN - A number of texts in Byzantine Greek and Excavations in 1992 and probably late Arabic scripts, 1993 uncovered mosaics in which could shed light on the the aisles of the church, and history of the late Arah the current dig which pro-Nabateans, have been uncoduced the scrolls is being vered in Petra, Minister of conducted in areas flanking Tourism Mohammad Adwan the basilica in advance of a said Tuesday. protective shelter to be huilt "These new findings are over the site, according to a equally important as to the

"these scrolls, most prob-

ably, are the documents of

the area inhabitants in the

The texts, in the form of

papyrus scrolls, were found

in the area immediately adja-

cent to the Byzantine Church

after two months of excava-

tion conducted by ACOR

with the support of the Minis-

try of Tourism and Anti-

fifth and sixth centuries."

statement by ACOR. famdus Dead Sea (Qumran) Originally measuring some scrolls and they are the first 30cm long and perhaps some of their kind to be found in 5-8 cm in width, the scrolls Petra, Dr. Adwan told the were apparently carbonised in a fire which destroyed the Jordan News Agency, Petra. According to Pierre Bikai, superstructure of the adiadirector of the American cent ehurch and affected the Centre of Oriental Research area of the huilding complex (ACOR), which is conductwhere the scrolls were kept, ing the Petra excavation, ACOR said.

The scrolls, ACOR said. were found crushed under and between the charcoal remains of the shelving on which they had been stacked and heneath nearly four metres of stone from the superstructure of the building as a result of an earthquake in A.D. 551.

"Because of their flattened

and carbonised structure, the number of scrolls found had yet to be determined," said ACOR, which estimated that at least 40 scrolls may be separated. A committee of interna-

tional experts is now being

assembled to undertake "this

delicate and demanding task

(of separating the crushed

scrolls and determine their significance)," ACOR said. In addition to the scrolls, carbonised clasps, glass fragments, small bronze chains and hurned wooden discs were recovered from the charcoal matrix. "This indicates that the scrolls were originally rolled around a rod fitted with end-caps and were stored in textile 'sleeves' and/

or wooden boxes with inlaid

glass decoration." ACOR

"Only when these carbonised papyri are separated. conserved and carefully unwrapped can the script be identified and understood," ACOR said.

"Until that time the significance of the texts remains tantalisingly unknown."

Lockerbie probe mired in blast confusion 5 years after blast revives

LONDON (Agencies) — Re-latives of victims of the Locklatives of victims of the Lock-erhie hombing gathered Tuesday to mark the fifth anniversary of the attack, prohing the airliner blast which killed 270 seem further than ever from catching the perpetrators.

The blast on Dec. 21, 1988, propourised Pan Am Flight 103 at an altitude of 10,000 bunctres, showering the Scot-tish village of Lockerbie with

blazing wreckage.
All 258 passengers and crew were killed, while 12 villagers died in houses set on fire by the falling debris. In the eyes of the international community, Lihya has long been the main suspect in

.For almost three years investigators in London and Washington have been intent on forcing Tripoli to hand over two Libyan suspects dentified after 12,000 interviews carried out in 54 coun-

Libya has steadfastly resisted, prompting the United Nations Security Council to sanctions against the country.

Libya refuses to surrender Abdul Baset Al Mohammad (Al Meghari and Al Amin Khalifa Fhima for trial in Scotland or the United States, where the plane was

- Lawyers for the two men say they are willing to stand trial in a neutral country. The United States has said it would press for an embargo on Libyan oil exports if it

persists in refusing to surren-

der them. Sunday that a key witness had retracted a statement incriminating Lihya in the

attack has given new impetus to suspicions that Syria or Iran may have been involved. A key early clue for inves-

tigators was the discovery among the wreckage of a fragment of an electronic detonator circuit and shreds of clothing in which the powerful semiex explosive had

been wrapped.
Initial theories pointed to-wards Tehran, which was suspected of ordering the bombing as a revenge attack for the "accidental" shooting down over the Gulf of an Iranian Airbus carrying 290 by a U.S. warship.
Investigators at that time

suspected the attack was car-ried out hy Ahmad Jibril's hardline Popular Front for the Libration of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), which is based in Syria.

An analysis of the fibres of the classic control of the class

the clothing which had held the explosives then led police to Malta; where a Libyan reportedly managed to regis-ter a suitcase containing half a kilo of semtex.

The snitcase was then allegedly transferred onto Flight 103 at Frankfurt prior to its departure for New

Investigators charged that the fragment of circuit belonged to a type of detonator which only Libya had purch-

Key witness Edwin Bollier initially told investigators he was certain the timer used to detonate the Lockerbie bomb was among a batch he had supplied to Libya in 1985. But Mr. Bollier, who runs

a small electronics firm in Zurich, Switzerland, told the Sunday Times: "I remember giving samples to the electronic office for the sale of military equipment at the East

Detained Americans linked with

German defence ministry... possibly the inquiry blaming Libya will change

The former East German Stasi, or state security police, maintained close contacts with Mr. Jibril's faction.

Some observers now believe the Jibril Group could have contracted out the bombing to Libyan agents, who would thus have been intermediaries rather than in-

On Tuesday, a memorial service was to be held in London's westminster Abbey, and 270 candles lit in honour of the victims.

Jim Swire, spokesman for the families of British vic-tims, told the Sunday Times the revelations undermined the enrrent case against

He said: "The wbole Lockerbie scenarin is a hypocrisy created for international poli-tical convenience," adding that "a full international inquiry" should be held to establish the truth.

The Sunday Times said the prosecution case against Libya "may now be on the verge of collapse."

In Berlin, Stasi files agency spokesman Thomas Rogalia said: "We know that the Stasi had contacts to a large num-ber of organisations, includ-ing groups in the Middle East. But we cannot yet say whether they were involved in Lockerbie.

British officials, asked to react to the reports, said any new evidence should he handed immediately to police investigating the mid-air mas-

They sifted through 200 tonnes of wreckage which was scattered over the Scottish countryside in the search

nascent Jewish terror group

TEL AVIV (AP) - Six people, including at least three American men and one woman, were jailed on suspincion of hording weapons and Bluestein is a law student curplanning attacks against Arabs, police said Sunday.

Their arrests were seen in Israel as a pre-emptive strike against Jewish militants seeking to organise an armed inderground that could meriously jeopardise Arabdiracli peace efforts.

of "These are groups that have long been mentally ready to conduct terrorist activities against Arabs. The only reason they don't is because they are Whider surveillance," said Ehud Sprinsak, a political scientist at Mehrew University in Jerusalem.

The crackdown followed the arrest last month of a militant rabbi, Avraham Toledano, chught at Tel Aviv's Ben Guribo international airport trying to smuggle in gun parts, boinb-making manuals, telesomes and silencers from the United States.

Those arrested were all were supporters of the Kach movement, founded by the late Rabbi Meir Kahane before his 1990 assassination in New York

City.
|Police nabbed the six Friday and an Israeli judge ordered them held on suspicion of conspiring to commit acts of terror against Arabs, membership in an unidentified illegal organisation and illegal, possession of weapons, said lawyer Larry

He is defending two of the Americans, Mark Bluestein, 25, and Howard Friedman, 36, both from Philadelphia. Mr. and Mr. Friedman is a businessman.

"He has no idea what hit him," Mr. Dah said about Mr. Bluestein, adding that he had no criminal record. The other two Americans in custody are Lynne Sherry Handleman, 41, from Miami, Florida and Aharon Weinstein, 33, whose hometown was not immediately available.

Israelis Baruch Ben-Yosef, a native of New York City who has dual nationality, and Israel Fuchs were also jailed and their homes searched by

The Kach movement on Sunday condemned the detentions as a political witchhunt, and predicted police would eventually have to let them go for lack of evidence.

"This is an unjustified political lynching. They are arresting people only because of their opinions," said Kach leader Baruch Marzel.

Three of the Americans were visited by U.S. embassy officials over the weekend. Embassy spokesman Carl Chan refused to give any further details.

About 10 per cent of the 130,000 Jewish settlers living in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip are immigrants from the United States.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's government has been under pressure to curb militant Jewish settlers and some have called for outlawing altogether rently studying at a seminary anti-Arah groups such as Kach and Kahane-Lives, which receive the bulk of their funding from the United States.

> Mr. Sprinsak, an author who studied the Jewish settler movement, said there are only a few hundred activists in the anti-Arab organisations.

> "It is time to call them undergrounds," said Mr. Sprinsak, noting it does not take large numbers to foment ominous violence. "They could become a very important link in a snowball of violence," he

> Police are still investigating the murder of three Palestinians gunned down in a driveby shooting Dec. 10. A previously unheard of Jewish group called the sword of David took responsibility for the slayings.

> The shooting took place near the West Bank town of Hebron and the settlement of Kiryat Arba, centres of Jewish militancy. Israeli newspapers have blamed the phenomena on new "Jewish undergrounds."rs

A group by that name carried nut bombings and shoot-ings against Palestinians in the occupied West Bank in the early 1980s. It was broken up and its members jailed, but all have since been released.

Beirut

horrors

BEIRUT (R) — A huge hlast ripped into the headquarters of the Falange Party in Beint killing two people and wounding 130 and bringing back memories of the horrors of 15 years of civil war in Lebanon.

The 250-kilogrammes bomb was placed in a truck left in Wasteland just behind the two-storey building in east Beirut's Saifi district.

Security sources said it hlew up on Monday shortly after mghtfall as the party's politburo was in its weekly meeting.
"This black incident reminds

the Lebanese of the nights of vinlence they lived during the war and which they thought became part of the past," Falange-run Voice of Lebanon radio said.

Saifi is just off the former green line" zone which divided Beirut into east and west during the 1975-90 war. The ceiling of the meeting room collapsed during the blast and blood stained the

floor inside the building. Politburo member Antoine Baaklini died in hospital from severe wounds. A civilian outside the huilding was also

killed. Hospitals put the number of wounded at 130, of whom 70 were Falange members. The rest were civilians wounded outside the building and incinded women and children.

The bomh was the biggest to hit Beirut, striving to recover from civil war, since November 1991 when the administration huilding at the American University of Beirut was destroyed in an attack in which one person died.

The explosion destroyed a small house nearby, damaged surrounding buildings and wrecked several cars. It cut electricity lines and shattered shop facades. Ten workers at

the nearby port were slightly wounded by flying glass.

The weekly polithuro session was being chaired by Salah Mattar, the Falange's oldest member, as party chief George Saadeh and his deputy Munic Al Haii were absent Munir Al Hajj were absent. "Just before we finished I

heard a huge blast and parts of the ceiling started coming down. I don't know what happened after that," Mr. Mattar, still bleeding from a wound to his head, told Reuters as he was treated at a hospital.

Troops cordoned off the headquarters. Bomb experts moved in to investigate as resone workers using flashlights cleared rubble with their bare hands to look for trapped people.
The right-wing Falange led

the Christians for most of the war. It opposes Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri's government but calls for dialogue among the various Lebanese groups.

"The message was received and we read it with its fire and destruction," said Mr. Saadeh. "It is a message against the civil peace but our reply is that we relish sacrifice for this peace's sake and have unshaken insistence to continue the march."

"It's as if our party's destiny is to pay the tax of war and said Mr. Saadeh, who peace," said Mr. Saadeh, who received telephone calls condemning the bomh attack from President Elias Hrawi and several ministers.

Interior Minister Bechara Merhej said: "We are confident that this incident will not disturb Lebanon's civil peace.' Bomb attacks were frequent during the civil war, killing civilians and assassinating pohtical leaders.

Sabbah urges Israel to rethink its claims

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Monsignur Michel Sabbah, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Monday said Israel must "rethink" its claims to sole control of the Holy City and share power with Palesti-nians and religious leaders. The top-ranking Roman

Catholic clergyman in the Holy Land said he believed Israeli Prime Minister Yitzbak Rahin's government was reassessing its claims to all of the city, including the sector seized from Jurdan in the 1967 war and "annexed."

"If Israelis want to have peace they must rethink it, I think they are thinking hut because of the public opinion they cannot say anything about it," Monsignor Sahbah told

foreign reporters.

If they want reconciliation, if they want Jerusalem as they want it, a city of God, a city of reconciliation, they must change their mind."

Monsignor Sahhah, 59, who was born in Nazareth and became the first Palestinian to serve in the post in 1988, was interviewed in the Latin Patriarchate located in the pld.

walled city of Jerusalem. In unusually candid remarks that come as Israel and the Vatican are on the verge of establishing formal diplomatic ties, Mosignor Sabbah said an-thorityn Jerusalem should be shared so that "everyone is master and no one obedient or a servant to the other.'

"Jerusalem belongs to two nations, two peoples, Israelis and Palestinians, and three re-ligions: Jews, Muslims and Christians. So we must find a special status for that which satisfies all these parties," he

"It could be capital for the Israelis and for the Palestinians and the religious capital... for Christians, as well...," he said, adding that religious leaders should have a say in city gov-

Monsignor Sabbah, wearing a large silver cross, said the Vatican-Israel normalisation, which will begin with the signing of a declaration of princi-

ples on Dec. 30, does not cover the future status of Jerusalem. As Latin Patriarch, Monsignor Sahbah holds a senior rank in the church and his authority extends to Israel, the occupied lands, Cyprus and Jordan.

He shares control with other churches over holy places such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, site of the crucifixion of Jesus. There are about 150,000 Christians in Israel and the occupied territories, less than half of whom are Roman

In a Christmas appeal, Mohsignor Sabbah called on Israel to free 10,500 Palestinian prisoners as a sign that it was still sincere about making peace. In particular, he said, Israel

should free Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, the spiritual guide of the Hamas movement.

Monsignor Sahbah said he feared for the "unity" of the Palestinian people, who were frustrated by the failure of peace to bring meaningful

changes on the ground.

They are in the same position of confrontation with soldiers every moment of the day, the prisoners are still in prison and the general instability is growing," he said.

Monsignor Sabbah chastised Israeli and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leaders for failing to keep their pledge to start implementing Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and West Bank region of Jericho on Dec. 13. "Our message to the leaders themselves is try not to play

with the sensitivities and the feelings of the people. Don't give promises which you can-

not give.
"If you give promises, keep them. If you give dates, keep up to the dates you give."

War with Kurdish rebels taking toll in Turkey

By Daniel J. Wakin The Associated Press

LICE, Turkey — The government minister flew to the heart of the Kurdish rebellion zone to proclaim that the army has matters in hand. He flew by ery nelicoptet above roads that have become unsafe to travel because of guerrilla attacks.

Guarded by dozens of sol-diers with M-16s. Necmettin Cevheri strode past an army tank at the muddy landing pad. He came to buck up the morale of the few remaining townsfolk two months after a battle between troops and rebels demolished much of this remote

"We are in control. Don't follow empty ideologies," he told about 100 mostly elderly men and wide-eyed children while soldiers in an armoured personnel carrier trained their weapons on the main road.

The army has inflicted more damage on the rebels this year, hut control is still elusive in Turkey's monntainous and poor sontheast, where Kurdish militants have waged a decadelong war for self-rule.

Guerrillas of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), numbering about 7,000 by government estimate and more than 15,000 by their own, have held the region virtually hostage. In recent months, the war

has emerged from a local conflict to threaten the economie and social well-being of all of Turkey, a vital Western ally next door to the unstable Caucasus states and the Middle East. Analysts say the war is costing the government \$6.6

billion a year, and ethnic tensions have worsened. For years the government in

Ankara treated the matter as a localised terrorist problem, ignoring demands from Kurds for local autonomy and protections for their language and me governme acknowledges it is waging war and has committed 140,000 soldiers to the fight. The guerrilla's increasingly

harsh tactics — the murder of teachers and other civilians who do not cooperate - have alienated many of the estimated six million Kurds in the region and outraged the rest of the country. Almost every week a soldier's funeral becomes the occasion for a rally against Kurds or the PKK, as the guerrilla group is universally known for its Kurdish ini-

Knrdish nationalism does not appear widespread outside the region. About half of Turkey's 12 million Kurds are integrated into Turkish society. The Kurdish region covers not only Turkey but parts of Iraq, Iran and Syria.

But the government's crackdown has provoked criticism,

The military campaign has led to civilian deaths and hrought claims of such govern-ment abuses as forcible evacuations of villages, beatings and destruction of homes. Police have closed a pro-PKK newspaper and detained lawyers who represent rebel sympathisers.
The government says exces-

ses are punished, and it denies the rights of Kurds are systematically violated.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Kuwait declares two-day weekend

KUWAIT (AP) - Government offices and banks will be taking a two-day weekend beginning in the new year, press reports said. Most Islamic countries currently maintain a one-day weekend on Friday. The independent newspaper Al Qabas quoted the head of the civil service office, Abdul Aziz Al Zaben, as saying government offices will close Thursdays and Fridays. Civil servants will work seven hours a day instead of six to make up the time on the other workdays. Government offices now work half days on Thursdays, when civil servants are notorious for being unproductive. Mr. Zaben notified all government ministries of the decision on Sunday. The newspaper quoted the governor of the central bank, Sheikh Salem Ahdul Aziz Al Sabah, as saying banks would take Friday and Saturdays off. The decision is not compulsory for the private sector.

Two Iranian 'agents' held in Paris

PARIS (R) — Two men suspected of being Iranian secret agents gathering intelligence about opponents of the Tehran government in France were remanded in custody on Monday, justice sources said. Judge Jean-Louis Bruguiere, who is in charge of terrorism probes, formally placed the two under investigation on suspicion of terrorist criminal conspiracy. One of the two, Iranian national Mojtaba Mashaby, 37, is also to be investigated on suspicion of involvement in the killing m Paris three years ago of Cyrus Elahi, an opponent of the Iranian government, the sources said. Elahi, a doctor who held American citizenship, belonged to a group supporting the family of the late Shah Reza Pahlavi. The other suspect, Hossein Yazdanseta, 33, is an Iran-born French national, the sources said. Both were detained in Paris last Thursday.

Arson suspected in blaze that killed 6 Kurds

MULHOUSE, France (R) - A hlaze which killed six Turkish Kurds in Eastern France a month ago could have been started deliberately, justice sources said Monday. The prosecutor in the town of Mulhouse had opened a fresh probe for suspected arson after a first report from experts. The blaze was originally blamed on a faulty stove. The sources said traces of petrol had been found in the staircase of the house, but there was no indication that the possible arson could have been an attack against immigrants. Local media have quoted residents as saying the blaze could have resulted from a dispute among

Senior Iranian banker accused of fraud

TEHRAN (AFP) - Iranian authorities have arrested a senior manager of a state bank of embezzlement charges in the second such fraud case in a month, newspapers said. A branch manager of the state-run Sepah Bank, identified only as Mohsen, was arrested along with an alleged accomplice on charges of pocketing 3,600 million rials (\$2 million), the daily Kayhan said. But it did not say when they were arrested. Mohsen and his partner were accused of illegally using the bank's holdings to speculate on the hard-currency market: Since the beginning of 1993, the central bank has tightly controlled and limited dealings in foreign currencies, in a bid to lessen the country's foreign currency expenditures. Several senior members of Tejarat, the country's foreign trade bank, including its managing director, were arrested last month on charges of embezzling millions of dollars, according to the Iranian press.

U.S. denounces Iranian death sentences

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The United States accused Iran of human rights violations and religious persecution Monday, citing death sentences against three members of the Baha'i faith. The criticism came as the 184-nation U.N. General in Iran. The vote criticising Iran's human rights record was 74-23, with 51 abstentions. U.S. delegate Victor Marrero told the assembly that a recent U.N. human rights report on Iran criticised the death sentences against two Baha'is held without charges since April 1989. A third Baha'i recently has been condemned to death for apostasy, he said. "It is clear from these and other cases that the regime in Tehran continues to flaunt the human rights of its own citizens, unrelentingly persecuting some simply because of their religious beliefs," he

Gunmen kill Kuwait policeman

KUWAIT (R) - Gunmen in a car opened fire at a police patrol in Kuwait on Monday and killed a policeman, the Interior Ministry said. The patrol had approached the car in the southern region of Roudiefa because it look suspicious, the official Kuwait News Agency reported.

Thai police arrest two Iranians

BANGKOK (R) - Thai police arrested two Iranian tourists on Tuesday on charges of murder resulting from rohbery, Karami Ali Reza, and Ghasem Ahmadi Pazoki; 27, were arrested a day after a male hotel receptionist was found dead in a hotel room in central Bangkok. The victim was found with a broken neck five hours after he was seen going to the Iranians' room, police told reporters. The victim's gold necklace, watch and cash were missing, police said. The Iranians face life in prison if convicted of the crime.

EC may ask Iran to lift Rushdie sentence

BRUSSELS (R) — The European Community (EC) may ask Iran to lift the death sentence on British writer Salman Rushdie, hut is wondering how best to tackle the subject, Belgian Fureign Minister Willy Claes said on Monday. "We shall be considering a new approach to Tehran. We are considering what is the most appropriate method for trying to put an end to the so-called fatwa (death sentence)," Mr. Claes, current EC president, told a news conference after a meeting of EC foreign ministers.

JORDAN TELEVISION Tel:, 773111-19 PROGRAMME TWO

18:00	Sports N.B.A.
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19:15	Le Journal De L'Histoire
19-10	News in Hebrew
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Bulletin supplied by the Department of

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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDER Jordan Valley

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His Majesty King Husselu Tuesday confers with visiting Qutari Minister of Education Abdulaziz

Khaled Omari (Petra pboto)

Jordan, Qatar to boost cooperation in education

AMMAN (Petra) - His Majesty King Hussein met at the Royal Court Tuesday with visiting Qatari Minister of Education Abdulaziz Turki who conveyed to the Monarch greetings from the Outari ruler. Sheikh Khalifeh Ben Hamad Al Thani, and exchanged views about regional and international affairs as well as bilateral ties.

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Education Minister Khaled Omari and the Qatari ambassador to Jordan were present at the audience.

Mr. Turki said that his country appreciates the services of the Jordanian teachers and other employees in Qatari institutions, noting that their performance is unique and far better off than workers from other Arab countries.

Speaking at a meeting, earlier, with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, at the Royal Court, Mr. Turki paid tribute to the Jordanian educational experiments, expressing hope that bilateral ties would be further promoted in the

interest of the two countries

and their people. Describing Jordanian-Qatari relations as strategic in nature. Mr. Turki paid tribute to the Arab Thought Forum and to the Crown Prince's role to

serve the Arab Nation. The Qatari minister listened to ideas and views of Prince Hassan, who called for regular meetings of officials from Qatar and Jordan to chart ways for enhancing cooperation hetween the two countries in various fields and promote the work of research centres in Doha and Amman.

The Crown Prince advocated the idea of regional cooperation and comprehensive planning with a view to safeguarding pan-Arab interests and to boost pan-Arab

cultural cooperation. The meeting was attended by Education Minister Khaled Omari and the : Prince 's Adviser Mohammad Saggaf. as well as Dr. Victor Billeh. head of the National Centre for Educational Research and

Development and the Oatsiri ambassador io Jordan.

The Qatari minister later left for home, ending up a four-day official visit to Jordan.

In a statement to the press before departure, Mr. Turki said he was impressed by the country's educational develop-

Describing his visit as successful. Mr. Turki said that he had discussed ways of promoting cooperation in education, the exchange of teachers and scholarships, noting that in the coming state the two sides will launch a new phase of closer cooperation.

Dr. Omari, who saw the Qatari minister off, said that the two countries will soon sign an executive programme for the implementation of an educational agreement which entails the secondment of Jordanian teachers to Oatar.

He said that Mr. Turki had expressed his country's desire to benefit from Jordan's educa-

House calls on international organisations to make Israel respect human rights

day issued a statement calling on international organisations, including the United Nations, to ensure Israel's commitment to the principles of human rights and to refrain from resorting to expelling Palestinian

The statement, which was issued on the occasion of the repatriation of the Palestinians stranded for almost a year in the Marj Al Zubur Camp, in

AMMAN (Petra) — The Low- southern Lebanon, said that the resolve and strong will of the expellees have influenced the world community which eventually force Israel to implement U.N. Security Council resolution pertinent to the ex-

pellees' question. Noting that Israel's abidance by Security Council Resolution 799 of 1992, which came too late, the statement said that in the past year the expellees have suffered a great deal,

largely due to the severe condi-WHAT'S GOING ON **EXHIBITIONS** Exhibition on the 100th anniversary of the death of French

tions, away from their home-

land. The House considered Israel's resort to imprisioning the returning expellees as another violation of their human rights.

The statement demanded that Israel fully comply with U.N. Resolution 799, which provides for the expellees to be repatriated and treated bumanely, and that their civil rights be respected.

The statement appealed to the world community to help achieve a just and durable peace, noting that the aspired peace requires that Israel respect the rights of the Arab citizens in the occupied lands, refran from practising repressive actions against the Arab citizens and respect their right to a secure and stable life in their own homeland.

Gammoh promises more consultations before introducing sales tax law

By P.V.Vivekanand Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Finance Minister Sami Gammoh Tuesday defended the government's move to introduce a sales tax, saying it did not represent a new tax and would not lead to higher prices since it was aimed at correcting certain imbalances in the present 'axation system.

Addressing a gathering at the chamber of industry attended by importers as well as local manufacturers, Mr. Gammoh also said that the tax, which will replace a consumption tax introduced last year. was not being imposed as a result of pressure from the International Monetary Fund

The minister said the decision to replace the consumption tax, which is levied at the point of departure to the market, was taken after a careful study if similar taxation laws of 85 countries.

Mr. Gammoh said that in effect there would not be any increase in prices since the tax would only replace the consumption tax, which the consumer is already paying since last year.

The consumption tax law, he said, has many loopholes and shortcomings at a time when Jordan bas to reconsider its entire taxation system and right sectors are addressed in the right manner.

As an example, be said that under the present taxation system four main categories paid 70 per cent of the JD 143 million collected in 1993 cigarettes, cement, soft drinks and steel bars.

The issue has drawn debate for more than one year now and businessmen complain that their views bave been put across to the government but little notice of their grievances has been taken.

Mr. Gammoh said a draft law on sales tax was in its final stages and would be completely ready only after close consultations with the economic consultative committee and members of the Cabinet.

But he assured the businessmen that the government would not go ahead with the draft law without more consultations.

He also told the gathering that the law would go into force only after approval by parliament of a range between five and 20 per cent, depending oo the nature of the product.

Businessmen argue that the introduction of the sales tax, which excludes basic food items, medicine and education material, is bound to increase prices and reduce the profit margin of local industries.

They point out that the industries have to pay the sales tax at the point of entry into the country and again when the finished product leaves the fac-

They also note that importers of finished products would have an edge over local manufactures since the sales tax they pay would be based on the net cost of the product rather than the actual landed cost i.e. including freight and customs. while the local industries' prices would have to include not only freight and customs but also processing and transport costs and profit margin.

Mohammad Asfour, opening Tuesday's meeting, criticised the sales tax move and said the government had not consulted the business community.

He said foreign investors would be discouraged to come to Jordan if the local market situation favoured imported products and reduced profit margins for local industries.

The tax, he said, will make the rich richer and the poor poorer.

Abdullah Malki, general manager of the Association of Banks in Jordan, advised the businessmen to avoid engaging the government in lengthy debates over the various points in the draft law and come up with definite requests on the amendments that they would

Dr. Malki suggested that the businessmen seek to change three key points in the law: - First, an article that allows the Ministry of Finance to go to the second stage of sales by including the services sector in the coverage of the levy. Dr. Malki said the second stage should not be introduced without a new law rather than a regulation by the Ministry of

- Second, the provision that determines the tax, including the customs. Addressing the importers, Dr. Malki said they should seek to ensure that the tax is levied at the net cost rather than the actual landed

Finance.

- Third, an article that allows the Ministry of Finar to increase the rate of tax without going back to Parlia-

"This is a dangerous area." Dr. Malki told the Jordan Times. "This means that any government could choose to increase the tax at any given point in time without getting parliamentary approval.

Answering questions from the audience, Mr. Gammoh said it was not too late for amendments to the law and that the government would hold more consultations with the industrial and commercial

But the main problem that faces the government, economic analysts said, is that it could not put off the introduction of the sales tax any furth-

The tax was scheduled to be introduced as of Jan. 1, 1993, under an agreement with the International Monetary Fundas part of the IMF-prescribed economic restructuring programme, but was delayed. because of political considerations raised by members of the government at that time.

The Cabinet had 10 memhers of Parliament who were seeking reelection in November and none of them wanted to be seen by their electorate as having been party to introducing a tax.

As a result, the introduction of the tax was put off until the deputies resigned from the Cabinet, ahead of elections. Al the same time, the government also made a stopgap arrange ment with the IMF by revamp ing the consumption tax system tem, included more items covered by the levy and increased and decreased the rate, or some items.

Bul, as things stand now, the government has to introduce the sales tax as of the beginning of the new year under provision of a standby agreement that it is finalising with

Seminar will tackle environment issues

AMMAN (J.T.) - "New environmentalism transition to ecological economy" is the title of a two-day international conference to be organised by the Jordanian Society for the Control of Environmental Pollu-Prion in Amman next-month.

A society's announcement said that the conference; to be organised in cooperation with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation of Germany at the Forte Grand Hotel on Jan. 24 and 25, would be attended by experts in environment from Jordan, the United States and Germany.

The conference, which will be opened by Walter Rudel from Friedrich Naumann Foundation and society officials, will tackle the following topics: Transition of the industrial economy to an ecological economy, the international development of environment _ sound products, legislation and taxation, measures in favour of an ecological economy at the European Community level, environmental enforcement in the U.S., resources use and rehabilitation. re-use and recycle within the industrial process, liberalisation and regionalisation of economy and trade environmental

military personnel.

Qyer, the last three months. government has been busy working out a plan that would achieve this goal and also improve the living conditions of the civil and military pensioners, said the prime minister in a to Amman after an 11-day tour of Japan and Malaysia. The plan aims at improving

the living conditions of employees by granting them suitable salary increases that would allow them to lead a decent life and serve as an incentive for the employees to double their efforts in their service to the nation, added Dr. Majali in an exclusive statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra,

At the same time, the government is drawing up a special scheme for improving the income of members of the judicial sector, to increase their salaries in view of the sensitive responsibilities they shoulder, added Mr. Majali.

Government works on improving civil servants' pensioners' living conditions ment employees, the governearlier this month demanded In Malaysia, Dr. Majali met

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister Abdul Salam Majali said Tuesday that the government has been working on a plan that would help improve the living conditions of civil servants and

In the course of improving the living conditions of government plans to direct its attention towards providing aid. in the form of subsidies to those sectors which deserve help, he

Furthermore, efforts are under way to work out a comprehensive health scheme to cover all citizens in the kingdom in view of the fact that spending on health services constitutes a heavy burdern on families with low or limited income, noted t1 : prime minis-

He said that a comprehensive administrative reform programme would be based on justice in a manner that would give incentives to employees to double their production. A ministerial committee is

taking care of these programmes, he added. The government said Dr. Majali, was encouraged by

Parliament members' calls to improve salaries of government employees and pension-Parliament members who.

addressed the House during the vote of confidence session

that employees' salaries he increased. The prime minister said that

the government would take the appropriate decision in this respect as soon as the ministerial committee has completed its Dr. Majali, who returned early Tuesday from his trip.

chaired a Council of Ministers' meeting and reviewed with the Cabinet the outcome of his visits during which he met with the Japanese emperor and crown prince in Tokyo and held meetings with the prime minister and the foreign and finance ministers.

The talks focused on ways to promote Jordanian-Japanese relations and Japan's contributions to Jordan's development projects that entail Japanese financing, like the Aqaba Thermal Power Plant, providing grants towards helping Jordan carry out its health programmes.

According to Dr. Majali, the Japanese government promised to offer Jordan facilities to carry out water dam projects.

with the prime minister and other officials of the public and private sectors to discuss oconomic and trade exchanges.

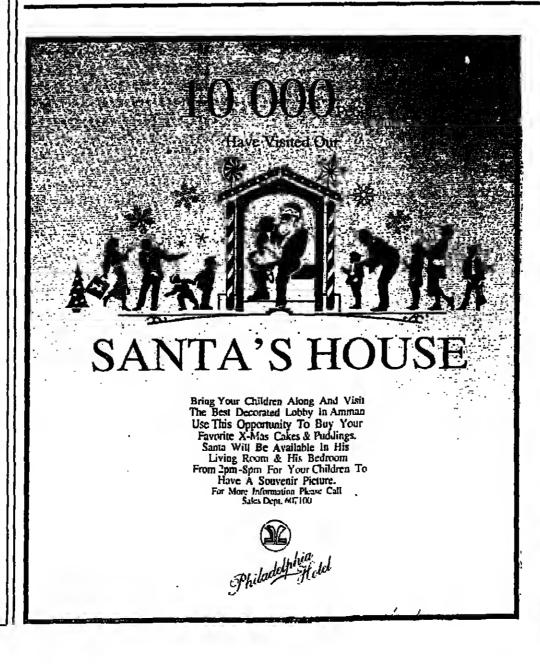
The prime minister noted that a bigh level trade delega-

tion from Malaysia was ex-pected to pay-a visit to lordan soon to discuss trade exchanges and investments by Malaysian businessmen in the King-Jom. Dr. Majali said he explained

the peace process noting that the Kingdom was determined to attain comprehensive peace on all fronts. During his meeting abroad.

Dr. Majali presented Jordan's views with regard to its continued support for the Palestinians in their quest to regain their rights and lands and the Kingdom's determination to regain rights over water resources and its drive to solve the refugee problem in line with U.N. resolutions.

According to the prime minister, the Japanese display ed support for Jordan's deavours and determination to back the peace process.





* Art exhibition by a number of Jordanian artists entitled The Sixth Exhibition — Samples From The Contemporary Jordanian Art 93" at the Spanish Cultural Centre. ☆ Art exhibition by Jordanian artists Khaled Hijazi, Mohammad Al Ameri, and Adnan Al Sharif at Phoenix Gallery for Art and Culture (Tel. 695291). Art exhibition by artist Hani Al Hourani entitled "Impressions from Wadi Al Walah" at Baladna Art Gallery. Art exhibition by artist Samia Zarou at the Open Studio "Al Marsam Al Maftub," Jabal Amman, 2nd Circle (9:00-13:00 and 15:00-17:00 all days except Fridays). ☆ Exhibition ''Prints and Drawings of Fakhreinissa Zeid'' (1915-1991) until the 15th of January '94 at Darat at Funuo of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "Permanent" Exhibition. (Tel. 643251/2). **CHRISTMAS BAZAARS** The Christmas bazaar at Al Nukhbah Exhibition Hall, University Road (Tel. 837304, 684257). the Christmas bazaar at the Amman International Auto Exhibition/Airport Road. ☆ Christmas bazaar by Jordan River Designs at Regency Palace Hotel (10:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.) |Tel. 656872). FILMS & DRAMAS * Video films to children & adults at the Goethe-Institut at 5:00 p.m. # Film entitled "Girl With Green Eyes" at the British Council at 7:00 p.m. (90 minutes). * Drama entitled "Locust" at the Drama Theatre at the Yarmonk University at 3:00 p.m. * Drama entitled "This is Life" at Al Hashimiya Theatre of the Municipality of Irbid at 6:00 p.m. ☆ Drama entitled "Saber and Sabriya" at Al Hashimiya Theatre of the Municipality of Irbid at 6:00 p.m. SPORTS ROUND-UP A one-hour programme featuring a condensation of the most popular games of the week with play-by-play amouncement at the American Center at 5:00 p.m.

novelist Guy De Maupassant at the French Cultural Cente:

★ Exhibition of Iraqi books at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Art exhibition artist Hanan At Dasouqi at the Student

Art exhibition by artist Ali Al Sabounji at the Royal

Hussein Twaij at Alia Art Gallery.

Cultural Centre.

Affairs Deansbip at the University of Yarmouk in Irbid. Art exhibition by artists Ibrahim Al Abduli and Abdul

Jordan Times

حورما بالها لوصا فالمه للمانتية مستك لحير بالأنجلالية في الدلسلة المستحكة الأدوسة

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Enter, rights commissioner

THE DECISION of the General Assembly Monday to create the post of High Commissioner for Human Rights is a giant and spectacular step in the annals of U.N. The fact that the assembly's resolution was taken unanimously makes this move, although long overdue, all the more irreversible as far as the many countries that had been either opposed or lukewarm to the idea are concerned. The proposal to establish such a high post was tested during the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights last June but was turned over to the General Assembly to act on after it became clear that there was strong opposition to it. The Third World countries had most to fear from upgrading the U.N. involvement in human rights issues because their records in that field have been by and large dismal and have therefore developed strong reservations about increased international efforts to meddle into their domestic affairs on such issues. The decision by the Vienna forum to pass the responsibility, as it were, was in fact intended to kill the idea altogether. What is clear now, however, is that the western initiative spearheaded by Washington has won the day by encouraging the developing countries to accept and support the proposal.

From the Third World countries' point of view, the central issue has always been that any higher international profile on human rights must be linked to the 184-member General Assembly where they make up the greater majority of the member states. As long as this objective was secured, the developing countries — which still prefer to put the accent on economic, social and cultural rights at the expense of civil and political rights — were in a better position to yield to western pressure.

In retrospect, the idea of creating this post has been supported by Jordan ever since it was floated in various international fora. Jordan voiced support for the proposal as far back as the mid-seventies when certain Latin American countries submitted it for consideration. As long as the mandate of the proposed high commissioner is to coordinate all international efforts in the field of human rights and he or she is answerable to the General Assembly, we have no reason to develop anxieties about it, we reasoned. As a matter of fact, this was the position of Jordan during the Vienna meeting as well. What matters is not the seniority of the post that will be charged with U.N. human rights' efforts, but the link between it and the General Assembly where the priorities of the majority of members could be reckoned with and respected. Against this backdrop, the creation of the post of High Commissioner for Human Rights is a worthy cause that deserves the support of all democratic states.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

EYES ARE directed these days towards Riyadh where the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries are holding a summit amid confusion in inter-Arab relations and unclear 'Arab policies not only in the Gulf area but throughout the Arab World, said Al Ra'i daily Tuesday. Every Arab is expecting the summit to come up with new initiatives aimed at ending differences among Arab governments and launching a chapter of brotherly ries and reconciliation, following three years of estrangement, said the daily. It goes without saying that the GCC countries stand to lose a great deal from the present divisions, especially because these countries are forced to spend a fortune on armament as they feel insecure, said the paper. It said that only nations that sell the weapons benefit from the state of affairs prevailing in the Gulf and the Arab World, especially in the Gulf region whose countries are continually making security arrangements and signing costly defence pacts with the western countries. Admitting that it is the right of each Arab Gulf country to carry out its own armament programme it finds fit for its defence purposes, the paper said, close relations with the Arab states outside the GCC and improvement in inter-Arab relations could save the GCC a fortune because good relations can make the countries more dependent on their Arab kinsmen rather than relying on an umbrella of U.S. and western treaties. A new situation charged with fresh challenges has emerged following the Gulf war and a reconsideration of GCC policies at the domestic and external level is of paramount importance added the daily. It expressed hope that wisdom and reason would prevail at the GCC summit meeting, enabling its countries to pave the ground for a new dawn in inter-Arab relations.

Clinton's first year — what kind of success?

By Dr. James Zogby

As 1993 draws to a close, the White House and the Democratic Party have been faxing daily memos and reports to the press and political analysts frumpeting the administration's successful first year in office.

Despite early setbacks, the president has, in fact, recorded an impressive set of legislative victories and initiatives. There are in all of the flurry of activity, some ironies to be found and some observations that are worth making at this point.

First of all, the claims of success in the daily faxes are absolutely justified. In the words of Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, Mr. Clinton's first year has been "the most productive first year of any presidem since Eisenhower's first term. It's a remarkable record, and the most striking thing about the American political scene now is that hardly any American knows as believes it."

In addition to budget. NAFTA, and the economic stimulus package, which were all close votes, with Mr. Clinton winning all but the last, there were quite a number of other pieces of legislation that helped to define the administration's first year.

After languishing for ten years in the Congress and being vetoed by President Bush, the Family and Medical Leave Act was signed into law this year. As he promised in the campaign, Mr. Clinton worked with the Congress to enact this piece of legislation. which guarantees that workers will be able to keep their jobs while taking time off to care for relatives suffering from serious illnesses. Mr. Clinton also kept his promise to reverse President Bush's so-called "gag order" against any discussion of abortion in federally funded family plan-

ning clinics.
The president also worked quickly with allies on Capitol Hill to pass the "Motor Voter" bill that eases regulations for voter registration, in many cases allowing people to register to vote as they get or renew their driver's licenses. Another high profile achievement of the administration was the passage and signing into law of the Brady Bill, another bill that was vetoed by President Bush. Although only a mild step towards reform of the nation's laws regulating guns, the Brady Bill is the first piece of national legislation on this issue since the Firearms Control Act of

Lost in the shuffle of the high profile battles mentioned above and those over various fiscal and budgetary matters, were two other significant pieces of legislation. The administration began to put its strategy for young Americans into place with the passage of the National and Community Service Act and a bill reforming and simplifying the government's stu-

dent loan programme.

The National and Community Service Act will, overthe next five years, provide money for college for 100,000 young people in exchange for two years of community service. And the reform of the federal student loan programme will provide more

money for student loans for the first time in twelve years while saving later collection

Polls done at the time and since have shown that all of these action meet with public approval which, with the exception of the reversal of the "gag rule" on abortion counseling, is overwhelming.

Another measure of Mr.

Clinton's success is that he has had to veto a single bill since taking office — a feat achieved by a first-year president only two other times in the last sixty years. This is in part a measure of Mr. Clin-lon's good relations with the Congress despite some early setbacks, but it is also a function of how his agenda has dominated activity on Capital Hill. Because in addition to the victories mentioned above, and the several budget-related marters that have consumed a great deal of time, the Congress is also working on Mr. Clinton's proposals on ethics and campaign finance reform. the vaunted health care reform legislation, and is in conference over the president's Anti-Crime Bill.

The second point worth noting is that this complex set of initiatives is helping to define Mr. Clinton's standing as a "new Democrat." Although he campaigned with the claim that he would be a new kind of Democrat, it has taken a year for him to show what he means

show what he means.

The old Democrat image is that of a politician devoted to

solving social and other problems through the government by creating programmes and raising taxes. The stereotype of this old Democrat is "soft" on crime, favouring programmes to deal with the root causes of crime over building more prisons and stiffening sentences. The old Democrat also habitually sides with organised labour over business interests, which trans-

isl slance on trade issues. But over the past twelve years, as U.S. politics has drifted slowly to the right, the old Democrat image fell out of favour with some Democrats, who felt that a more pro-business, tough-on-crime and anti-tax position would be better for the party. Although this was always a latent tension in the party. over the past decade it has become an institutionalized division between the liberal 'left" and conservative "right" wings of the Democratic Party.

lates into a strong protection-

Mr. Clinton's new Democrat label means a blending of the two approaches. He has moved to the centre of American politics. agreeing with the Democratic left on some issues and the right on others.

The Family and Medical Leave Act and the Brady Bill were broadly supported by the liberals and passed with overwhelming Democratic support in both Houses. His budget bill and the recent fight over further deficit reductions was a more mixed affair, with members of Con-

gress from both wings of both parties finding reasons to vote for and against both proposals. But on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and on the Anti-Crime package inwailing, Mr. Clinton relied on some support from conservative Democrats and got the majority of his support from Republicans.

As I have mentioned before, Mr. Clinton has put his
coalitions together on an
issue-by-issue basis. There
have been very few members
of Congress who have voted
for even a majority of Mr.
Clinton's agenda. much less
all of it. Of particular concern
to some is that the administration's agenda is not specifically geared to attract Democratic support in some cases,
and they worry that he seems
so willing to look to the Republicans for allies, as he did
over NAFTA.

So the questions are: Is the President shaping a new coalition? And if so, will it last? To this point, the evidence on both questions is mixed.

The place Mr. Clinton moved, from what is discernable of his overall philosophy, is not virgin soil. There are a number of Republicans, including the governors of Massachusetts and California, who describe themselves and their policies and fiscally conservative but socially liberal. Such a label would also seem to fit Mr. Clinton. But these Republican gov-

ernors have run into problems similar to Mr. Clinton's: by relying on members of the other party to get part of their agenda, they alienate the true believers in their own party. This is something that has definitely happened to Mr. Clinton.

Organised labour has been withholding its usual monetary support for the Democratic Party due to its anger over Mr. Clinton's pro-NAFTA stance. The Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) bas clashed with Mr. Clinton several times this year, with even more bitter conflicts on the horizon. And Jesse Jackson, who is still the leading spokesman for the left wing of the party, has not been an ally of Mr. Clinton's on any piece of legislation since the failed economic stimulus bill.

praise from conservative Democratie leaders, though as we shall see, that branch of the party has not universally accepted the president's agenda. Likewise, although Mr. Clinton bas won kind words from even such staunch Republican figbters as Senator Bob Dole and Congressman Newt Gingrich, they bave both made it clear that their alliances with Mr. Clinton over NAFTA and the Anti-Crime package have only been marriages of convenience and they look forward to beating other Democrats in 1994 and Mr. Clinton himself in 1996.

Mr. Clinton has won some

Yet it is impossible to

ignore the fact that Mr. Clinton's legislative accomplishments coincide strongly with public sentiment and that although he has been knocked down and declared dead more times than any observer cares to count, he has lost only one high profile battle of the many he has fought. Seemingly, however, his victories have not given him the kind of political capital that helps to build coabtions, and as yet one would be hardpressed to name even the core of a Clinton coalition in

Congress. But his performance has not gone unnoticed by everyone. The political analyst Joe Klein noted that there is "something unusual and admirable about Clinton's first year. He expended great gobs of political capital on ssue (like) deficit reduction, free trade, etc., that will yield bim no immediate gain." The voting public bas shown that it appreciates political courage (particularly when it is combined with an excellent television presence such as Mr. Clinton bas).

This seems to be borne out in recent poll results that show Mr. Clinton with a positive rating of 57 per cent compared to only 37 per cent negative, and bis performance must be the main reason the Democratic Party enjoys and positive-negative rating of 54 per cent to 32 per cent, while the Republican Party bas lower positives and higher negatives, with a favourable-unfavourable rating of 50 per cent to 39 per cent. And when asked whether Mr. Clinton and the Democrats or the Republicans are more sincere about moving the country forward, the president and his party come out ahead by a 50 per cent to 24 per cent margin. So despite all the bruises

So despite all the bruises he's endured, Mr. Clinton still comes out ahead of his two strongest potential challengers in hypothetical matchups for 1996. He would beat Senator Dole by a margin of 50 per cent to 39 per cent. And even against Jack Kemp, a Republican proponent of the fiscally conservative socially liberal stance, Mr. Clinton comes out ahead

49 per cent to 36 per cent. This and other polling data suggests that, because he is attacking issues that the public is very concerned about. he is gaining supporters. By 1996, the president may yet coalition among the voters even if he fails to build one in the Congress. Or at least he is making progress in that direction. As House Minority Whip Newt Gingrich noted: "President Clinton has every reason to feel pretty good right now. In all fairness, as a partisan Republican; you have to give him pretty positive marks. He clearly came out of the year better than he went in.

With comments like that coming from one of the harshest-tongued critics in Congress, Mr. Clinton must feel rather comfortable as he beads into the holidays and prepares for 1994. Yet, as we head into the new year, it is only appropriate to look to the future. And as far as U.S. politics is concerned. Shakespeare's augury that "what's past is prologue" seems very apt.

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NATO keeps wary eye on Russia

By Peter Mackler Agence France Presse

BRUSSELS — NATO is sticking to plans to boost military ties with its old Soviet Bloc foes but keeping a new wary eye on Moscow after a strong showing by ultra-nationalists in Russia's elections.

While NATO officials stress it is too early to draw conclusions from Snnday's parliamentary polls, a note of caution has crept into their statements after months of hailing Moscow as a reliable post-cold war partner.

Secretary General Manfred

Woerner took pains Tuesday to underline the 16-member alliance's two-track policy toward Russia, matching cooperation with the need for NATO "cohesion and vigilance."

The success registered by the Liberal Democratic Party of Vladimir Zhirinovsky, a champion of Russian expansionism, sent alarm bells ringing in western capitals aiready wondering about Moscow's future direction.

"A lot of what be (Zhirinovsky) proposes is worrying," said one NATO
analysis. "But it would only be

a continuation of what we bave seen over the last six to eight months."

NATO officials bave noted a hardening of Russian rhetoric since the army bailed out President Boris Yeltsin in his bloody showdown with parliamentary bardliners in Octobet.

Moscow bas also become more aggressive about bringing Georgia into the confederation of independent states, protecting ethnic Russians abroad and establishing Russian prerogatives as peacekeepers in former Soviet republics.

NATO has sought without success to get a full briefing on the new Russian military doctrine which would allow Moscow to launch a first nuclear strike and deploy forces outside its territory.

Yet the alliance is still pressing ahead with plans to tighten links with Russia and offer. Eastern European states closer cooperation but no security guarantees or promises of NATO membership, which Moscow opposes.

Countries such as Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Słovakia are seeking to join NATO and their candidacies bave taken on new urgency after the right turn taken by Russia in its elections.

Polish President Lech Walesa even suggested that withoutfirm membership prospects his country might spurn the "partnership for peace" plan which NATO is expected to adopt at its summit here next month. But NATO diplomats and

analysts said the alliance would tread carefully before considering additional security assurances for the Eastern Europeans and the Baltic states bying uneasily in Russia's shadow.

"It's natural that these countries feel more worried," said one NATO diplomat, who asked not to be named. "The Baltic republics are the most obvious examples. We will continue to look at the whole issue."

Andre Dumoulin, of the European Institute for Research and Information on Peace and Security, said that NATO would have to make sure that any move to enlarge did not end up weakening the alliance.

"They will go slowly. They cannot promise anything," Mr. Dumoulin said. "Cantion will be the order of the day because of the elections."

The political turmoil in Russia will also reinforce warnings by NATO officials against further cuts in military spending by member states which have already slasbed their budgets and force levels considerably.

Mr. Woerner told a NATO defence ministers meeting bere last week that any additional reductions "would risk undermining the quality of our forces and thus affect the credibility of our collective defence."

But NATO officials also urged a wait-and-see attitude on Russia's future political orientation, especially with the latest poll results showing that Mr. Zhirinovsky and his party might not have done as well as first feared.

The NATO analyst said that Mr. Zhirinovsky clearly had won solid support among the army rank-and-file in Russia, more by promising higher salaries and more housing than by championing the cause of a greater Russia.

But the extent of his influence on the military remained to be seen.

"The senior leadership does not need an explosive political figure to stimulate emotions, particularly in the middle ranks," the analyst said. "They draw do not want the election to tical:

draw the military into the poli-

LETTERS

Thank you, dear brother

To the Editor:

On Tuesday, Dec. 21, at around 7.30 a.m., as I was approaching my house off the Sixth Circle in Sweifiyeh. I noticed a white Volkswagen with yellow plates following me closely. I gave a right signal for the car to pass, but the driver insisted to follow me.

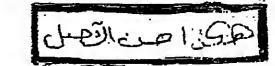
As I was parking my car, he stopped. I rolled down the window. He came to me and said: "I have been following you for some time now. Your child (2 years old) is standing in the front seat. He could get burt if you stopped suddenly. Please, you must understand that your child could be a victim."

I was not surprised to hear this piece of advice. Before he turned to leave I asked if he was German. He nodded.

I am writing this letter to thank this German brother for his great concern. May God bless him and all the people like him who care. Danke.

Nabii Bayouk, P.O. Box 850011, Amman 11185.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.



Falange HQ blast a 'setback'

(Continued from page 1)

two years to the day after a car-bomb explosion in the neighbourhood of Basta killed 20 civilians and wounded 111 others.

The attack on the Falange revived memories of the violence - marked by carbombings, shelling and kidnappings — which devastated Lebanon for 15 years (see page

As rescue workers cleared the debris with bulldozers after an all-night search, hospital officials said many of the 100 people wounded were still in serious condition.

The party meeting was attended by 120 members, but the three top leaders, party chief George Saadeh, his deputy Munir Al Hajj and secretary general Karim Pakradouni were all absent.

Dr. Saadeb, who is ill, at home, accused the enemies of peace in Lebanon of staging the bombing. There was no immediate claim of responsi-

"The message was received, in all its fire and its devastation. It's a message against peace," Mr. Saadeh said. But be did not specify who could have carried out the attack. At its last congress in November, the right-wing Falange — the oldest Christian

faction — distanced itself from

other Christian political groups

by moving closer to Damascus. Syria is a major powerbroker in Lebanon, where it has 35,000 troops,

The Falange defended its pragmatism by saying it was high time for the Christians to return to the forefront of the political scene after boycotting the 1992 general election.

The congress also put an end to the link between the Falange and its former armed wing, the Lebanese Forces led by Samir Geagea who tried but failed a year ago to take control of the party.

Former Lebanese President Bashir Gemayel, a Falange leader, was killed with 21 aides when a bomb went off one floor above a meeting in another party office in east Beirut on Sept. 14, 1982, one day before be was due to be

Another President, Rene Mouawad, was killed with 23 assistants when a car-bomb ripped through his motorcade in Nov. 22, 1989, days after he took office.

The Falange party, founded in 1936, is made up almost exclusively of Maronite Catholics. Its post-war policy of openness toward Muslims and Syria has angered other Maronite groups.

The Falange has also been at odds with Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, who has tightened his control on govern-ment since he took office 14 months ago.

Settlers' number goes up

(Continued from page 1) cide, he said. It was not yet debated.

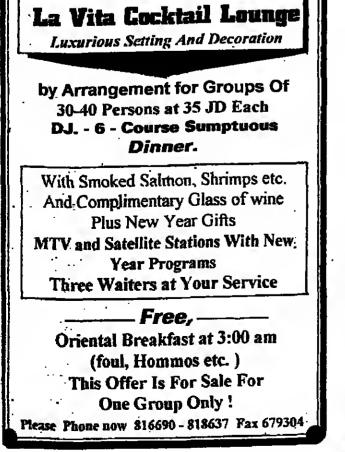
"We want to allow them to turn over a new leaf, and the soooer the better, instead of waiting another five years until the end of autonomy," Mr. Katz said.

"I met a delegation of set-

tlers... from all over the West Bank and they all told me they were ready to move into Israeli territory if the government belps them," Mr. Katz said.

He urged the government to eocourage settlers to move to the Galilee in northern Israel or the desert area in the south





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ger brit

Anxious growers keep eyes peeled for deadly banana fungus

By Steve Hays

Reuter
AMSTERDAM — Bananagrowing countries are fighting a spreading epidemic that threatens disaster for the

world's fourth largest food crop, commodity experts say. The culprit is black sigatoka, an airborne fungus that attacks leaves of the tree and devastates the crop.
"We are facing a serious

threat to the Cavendish banana which is the main export crop and eveo more worrying to the Plantain type, which is the staple food crop for large parts of Africa," a spokesman for the Common Fund for Commodities said.

The Amsterdam-based CFC is a U.N. associated body and

has secured an agreement with the World Bank to finance research into the disease.

The limited number of varieties and the difficulty in breeding new strains makes the banana particularly vulnerable to disease and the scale of the problem is huge.

The world banana crop is about 70 million tonnes a year,

of which 10 per cent is ex-ported. Globally the fruit ranks after rice, milk and wbeat in total cash value. In the 1950s the world's anana trade was wiped out by anama disease which attackthe main export type, Gross lichel. Growers were forced

turn to the resistant Caven-This time there is as yet oo resistant alternative to the Cavendish and Plantain, a starchy, non-sweet relative eaten as a staple in tropical latitudes.

"To illustrate what black sigatoka can do, look at Colombia where it arrived five years ago and within two years the multi-million Plantain export industry had stopped," said Gabrielle Persley,

biotechnology manager at the World Bank. Black Sigatoka, named after a valley in Fiji where it was discovered, wrecked the export Banana industries in the south Pacifie islands and spread to Latin America in the 1970s.

In the mid-1980s it moved to Africa, reaching East Africa towards the end of decode Ms.

Countries such as Uganda, where Plantains are the main food crop, are highly vulnerable, she added.

The disease has been controlled by using increasing amounts of chemical fuogicides which cause environmental damage, Professor Ivan Buddenhagen of the University of California told Reuters by tele-

He estimated the worldwide cost to growers of spraying for the disease at \$50 million a

year.
"The problem is black sigatoka bas developed resistance to most of the compounds used against it and now there is only ooe major fuogicide group left that is effective." he said.

Mr. Buddenhagen said a mutation which might overcome the last main defence against the disease could appear "tomorrow or in 10

years' time." Alarm bells rang last year when the baoana crops of Guatemala and Honduras were devastated by black sigatoka and the fuogicide appeared to be ineffective, he

Investigation revealed that the Central American epidemic appeared to stem from unusually wet weather cooditions.

Mr. Buddenhagen said the banana crop was facing a double threat with the reappearance of soit-Panama: ease, which kills the plant by blocking its water capillaries, in previously resistant Caven- for using dish bananas in Australia and in kept in

"Bananas bave oot received the plan in the last 25 years the kind of ed in the support and research a crop of e governits importance, such as wheat 2.4 billion or corn, would receive in the loans to U.S.," he said.

"In the north we look on bananas as a dessert fruit, but sets tota in the southern countries star- liture a chy bananas are a major food 9 perfeen

The initiative by the CFC, the World Bank and other figure i bodies bas taken five years to in at the put together and will provide inge tate about \$10 million for research Tuesday into breeding disease-resistant ivals pe bananas and disease management practices.

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Prisoners used as human shields and labourers in Bosnian war

Agence France Presse MOSTAR. Bosnia-Herzegovi-

By Alain Bommenel

na - The bullet, fired by a fellow Croatian soldier, ended Drajan's 154 days as a prisoner of the mainly Muslim Bosnian

It shattered his right arm on Nov. 22, rendering him useless to his captors who had been forcing the 23-year-old to dig trenches along the front in this southern Bosnian city.

"I don't have any hard feelings against the fellow soldier

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who injured me. He was doing his job." said Drajan, as he lay in a hospital bed here following his release last week as part of a prisoner exchange between the Bosnian army and the Croat Defence Forces (HVO). "I would have also fired," he

Prior to the war that erupted in this former Yugoslav republie 19 months ago Drajan was a law student.

But soon after the conflict began, he joined thousands of other young men — Serbs, Muslims and Crouts — who

LA MAISON

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took up arms and were later taken prisoner by the enemy. The prisoners, estimated at

5.000 throughout Bosnia, for the most part have been forced and sometimes beaten into digging trenches along the frontlines, building bunkers or retrieving some of the injured while fired upon by fellow soldiers on the other side.

Some have been used as liuman shields by their captors. according to humanitarian groups who have denounced the treatment of the prisoners as a violation of international

Beware of imitations

BESTOURS

human rights conventions. "I also had to dig graves." Drajan said, recounting his days in captivity reflected in his

weakened body and hollow cheeks. He said of the 110 prisoners held with him. 17 were killed by shots fired by their own

side, and nearly all were injured. "One of my friends was shot twice," he said, "He was treated and then sent back to

Drajan pauses for a mement and then adds: "In the end he

The fighting in Mostar has been raging for seven months with Cross controlling the western part of the city and laying slege to the eastern Mushim sector where about

50,000 people are trapped. Sol-

diers from either side are often

separated by less than 50. "When the snipers see the prisoners they aim at the shoulders, the arms of the hands, said one humanitarian official. "That way the prisoners be-

come useless for the enemy.

Joso Perie, a 63-year-old pensioner, was taken prisoner by the Bosnian army in June and forced to dig bankers for five months.

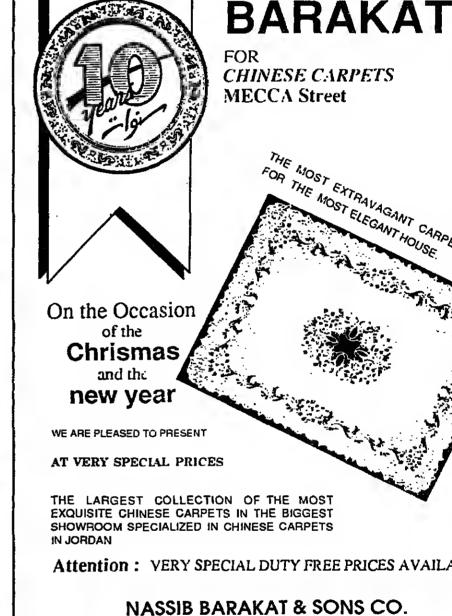
His ordeal ended a few days

ago when he was ordered to tetrieve a gasoline tank from an empty building and was injured in the stomach by s shrapnel from a shell that ex-ucks ploded nearby.

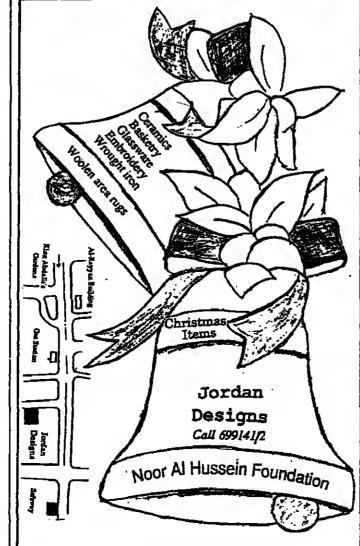
He was later released and is a now recovering in hospital.

"I am waiting until I get ACT

better," said another injured soldier. "And then I will go S back to the from to fight."









Social Security Corporation reforming investment programme

By Ian Atalla and Rozenn Hommery Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Social Security Corporation (SSC) is undergoing several reforms in its investment programme, and additional ones are planned, said Ahmad Al Sweiti, the assistant director general for investments at the SSC. But at the same time, the SSC is apparently regarded with no small amount of scepticism by some in Jordan's husiness cir-

"The SSC is well-known for making poor investments and losing money." a factory owner, who declined to be named, stated bluntly.

At the end of September 1993, the SSC's portfolio, totalling some JD 545 million, according to Mr. Sweiti, stood as follows: 14 per cent (JD 77.5 million) in equities, 32 per cent (JD 175 million) in loans and debt instruments, seven per cent in real estate, and 46 per

cent in liquidity.
"The SSC's ratio of equities investment is very poor. It needs to be raised dramatically," said Ahmad Al Nammari,

a financial researcher. Over the last nine months we developed a new invest-ment strategy." Mr. Sweiti

said. "Over the next four years we hope to increase our equities ratio to 25 per cent and our real estate ratio to 12 per ceot. We want to play a larger role in the development of Jordan's economy.

But all this cannot bappen overnight. As investors, change ing the portfolio ratios does not mean that we hastily rush into new investments merely for the sake of diversifying. without finding good opportu-

nities," he explained.
"As well," he added, "we need a high liquidity ratio to insure steady and rapid payments to our subscribers and the present yields to be found in equities here in Jordan are not very high. In reference to the SSC's 46

scribed by some economists as excessive, be also considered it We plan to reduce it over the next three to four years. In my estimation, our overall li-quidity ratio should be 25 per cent for this stage in the SSC's development," he pointed out.

per cent liquidity ratio, de-

"But, remember that we must be, by the nature of our responsibilities, a conservative corporation, he said. He added that while the SSC is a public sector institution, it receives no financial support from the government and is responsible for covering all its operational expenses and its payments to subscribers and

In addition, he noted, liquidity includes money instrumeots such as certificates of deposit (CD) and treasury bills, which are earning revenue and are not merely idle money.

Mr. Nammari, bowever, was critical: "The 46 per cent of the SSC's portfolio which is tied up m liquidity doesn't just repre-sent overly conservative investhe commented. "It reing," he commented. "It reflects sheer irresponsibility. I welcome Mr. Sweiti's proposal to lower the ratio to 25 per cent, although this is still too high, in my opinion. But it will be difficult for him to do this as there is a close relationship between the SSC and Jordanian banks which influences the SSC's choice to keep a high ratio of deposits in the banks."

Mr. Nammari said that in his .

judgment, the SSC should only keep about 20 per cent of its portfolio as liquidity in bank deposits, CDs, etc. There was also some critic-

employees. To run an investments department which is handling such large sums of money," said the factory owner, "you need highly qualified people.
They do not have them.
Mr. Sweiti explained that it

ism of the SSC's investment

was sometimes difficult for the SSC to compete head-on with private institutions in offering salaries and incentives to hire the best investment workers available. He said that for now, the SSC was seeking to strengthen its investment staff through improved training and that in the future "we would like to bave more leeway to make investment decisions and boost incentives for employees and guarantee that we always bave high-calibre people handling our investments, especially due to the critical nature of our role in Jordan."

However, said Mr. Nam-mari, "the SSC's history of poor investing cannot simply be blamed on its employees. The SSC's board of directors has the full power to raise the salaries and incentives offered to SSC investment workers, under article 9A of the Social Security Law. But until now they have not. The responsibility for any problem rests

squarely on their shoulders." In addition, Mr. Nammari said, "when it comes to the SSC making investments, there are simply too many conflicts of interest on the part of those ultimately responsible for making the decisions."

An SSC employee, who preferred to remain anonymous, concurred.

"The SSC has to invest more carefully. There should be no considerations taken for any investment other than the investment itself."

Mr. Sweiti said that the SSC was aiming to improve its rela-tionships with private business and increase its role in the private sector. 'Our role bas been a modest

one so far," be said. "We want to create a much closer relationship so that the private sector feels comfortable about accepting us as partners."
Mr. Nammari responded

that in general, most business-

men and employers in Jordan had, for their own reasons and interests, long been opposed to the SSC "and have, from the beginning, tried to block every progressive proposal or plan for the social security system."

Lately, he added, a new gen-eration of Jordanian businessmen with more open minds had come onto the scene, hut their presence had not yet had a major impact on the Jordanian economy.

Mr. Sweiti mentioned that the SSC had recently launched a private company affiliated to the SSC, Sharikat Al Daman for Investments, with a starting capital of JD 10 million.

Most importantly, he said, it would be seen at large as mainly a private sector entity, and when this is the case, other companies feel more comfortable about working with you, and it is easier to open up relationships with the private

The ultimate goal, Mr. Sweiti said, was for the new company to stand as an intermediary for the SSC between the two sectors. In addition, be said, it would have more flexibility to act and manoeuvre than a public organisation would.

In addition, Mr. Sweiti said, the SSC had lately begun to implement structural changes in its own investment department, which would now be split into three units, each with coocise responsibilities: an equities department, also responsible for organising and promoting any new corporate investment projects, a financ-ing and banking relations department, responsible for the SSC's liquidity and loan portfolios and a real estate depart-

Mr. Nammari was critical of the SSC's launching of Sharikat Al Daman, saying that if the SSC really wanted to pursue more sophisticated private sector-style investing and cut back on bureaucratic restraints, as well as strengthen its ties with the private market, than the way to do that was through solid reforms inside the SSC's internal offices and not through a new company such as this, which he said was mainly a "cosmetic change and an unnecessary entity.

Mr Sweiti said that there

had been calls for the SSC to increase its subscription fces to insure against eventual future risks in its payments to pensioners, but "we believe that we should try as much as possible for now not to increase the hurden on our subscribers. And for the next ten years, at least, our fioancial position should be healthy."

Mr. Sweiti said the SSC was reevaluating its policies to-wards hotels and tourist rest houses which it owned.

"I feel that eventually we should be concentrating purely on investing, which is our real husiness, and not be in the business of managing hotels and rest houses ourselves."

He said that in the future, the SSC would continue to manage those locations which it was running profitably on its own and would contract private sector management to run the rest on the SSC's behalf, although the SSC would retain ownership of them.

In addition, he saw a need for the SSC to develop a more advanced information base for investment.

OECD sees world economic growth picking up next year

mic growth should start gathering pace next year but unemployment will continue to climh in the absence of serious reforms to the labour market.

the OECD has said. In its end-of-year outlook. the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) said it expected average growth of 2.1 per cent in its 24 member countries in the first half of 1994, accelerating to 2.7 per

cent in the second half. Economic growth in 1993 was an annualised 0.8 per cent in the first half and is seen at 1.4 per cent in the second half.

But unemployment will climb to 8.5 per cent in the first half and 8.4 per cent in the second half of next year, from just over eight per cent this year, boosting the total number out of work to nearly 35

million people. It urged countries to implement a range of labour market reforms to bring down the jobless rate, saying that economic growth alone would not be enough to put people back to

work Macroeconomic policies that promote economic recovery will help but the largest part of most countries' unemployment problems are structural in nature and require structural remedies." the think-tank for industrial na-

tions said. However, inflation is likely to continue to slow, falling to around three per cent or less

hy 1995 and potentially recreating the kind of economic stability which underlay boom

years in the 1960s. "The emerging very favourable price situation, if sustained, will help to establish un economic environment more conducive to sustainable increases in productive investment, output and employment than has existed since the early 1960s," it said.

It added that lower interest rates and huoyant growth in some non-OECD countries. particularly in Asia, would underpin economic grawth next year.

On future policies, it said that given a steady rise in public deht between 1979 and 1992, the 24 OECD countries had little room now to increase spending to boost growth and would have to rely instead on cutting interest rates.

"With little scope for expansionary macroeconomic action on the fiscal side, support for recovery in current circumstances must rely largely, if not solely. on monetary policy. the OECD pointed out.

In Europe in particular, budget deficits had increased so much in recent years that there was virtually no room to boost spending. Interest rates would have to come down further.

Countries whose interest rates are shadowing those in Germany could face an increasingly difficult situation in German rates continued to decline only slowly.

WASHINGTON (R) - W.

Edwards Deming, the guru of quality control who helped Japan rebuild its industrial base following World War II died at his Washington home early Monday of natural causes, an aide said. Deming was 93.

Deming remained active as a teacher and consultant until just before his death, travelling around the United States offering advice and seminars on quality control to businesses and husiness students.

Despite failing health, he had already penciled in several dozen seminars for 1994, his

Though he was revered in Japan. Deming always felt slighted in his own country, believing that with few exceptions American manufacturers sourned his theories.

In his seminars and scholarly works, he urged management. to pay close attention to workideas and complaints, and to regularly and continuously work to improve all opera-

Improve constantly and forever the system of produc-

tion and service." he wrote in his "14 points for management. "Put everybody in the com-

pany to work to accomplish the transformation." be wrote. He was born Oct. 14, 1900, in Sioux City, Iowa. After earning an advanced

degree, he worked for 18 years as an obscure federal government mathematician and statistician, where he first began developing techniques to im-

prove the quality and efficiency of business procedures.

Following the war, General Douglas MaCarethur asked Deming to travel to Japan to help conduct a census and assess the country's ability to rebuild.

Deming soon was touring the Japanese countryside, lecturing corporations on how to assure efficient operations and reliable products.

Japanese manufacturers honoured him in 1960 hy creating the annual Deming prize. In June 1987, then-president Ronald Reagan honoured him with the National Medal of Technology.

In the early 1980's, he was hired by Ford Motor Co.'s then-president, Donald Peterson, to help improve the quality of Ford automobiles.

In a statement issued Monday. Ford said Deming had been instrumental in guiding the company's quality efforts. "He motivated thousands of

Ford Motor Company employees through the numerous seminars on quality he con-

Edward Deming, quality control expert, dies at 93 ducted," the automaker said in a statement.

Deming wrote several books and 170 scholarly papers. Also a music scholar, he wrote two masses and several canticles and anthems.

During his multi-decade career as a consultant, his clients included railways, telephone companies, trucking firms, manufacturing firms, hospitals, law firms, government agencies and universi-

Beijing slaps price controls on 27 goods

BEIJING (R) - With urban inflation becoming a serious problem for China, the capital Beijing slapped price controls on 27 major commodities that had explosive price rises the past week, the official China Daily said Tuesday.

The controls cover daily necessities from rice to pork. The prices of grain, rice, cooking oil, pork and eggs rose between 30 to 40 per cent over the last week in the capital, the newspaper said.

China is extremely cerned about urban inflation, which hit an annual 21.9 per cent in November.

Economic supremo Zhu Rongji this week declared that 'stabilising the grain price and inflation... are key to smooth implementation of next year's reforms."

Mr. Zhn's remarks, first broadcast on state radio and television Monday, appeared on the front pages of major newspapers Tuesday in a sign the Communist Party considers the matter to be extremely

Runaway inflation the last time China's economy overhe- . ated was one of the causes of the pro-democracy demonstrations in Beijing's Tiananmen

the army on June 4, 1989. China's leaders bave declared they are determined to hring the current economic boom to a "soft landing." So far, however, two con-

Square which were crushed by

secutive years of 13 per cent economic growth show no signs of abating. With the economy caught in the transition period between socialism and market-style

freedom, the fast growth is causing dislocations and bot-"There's always a big burden on urban residents like

works for the government. "There's never a balance." "The prices have gone np too high," said a middle-aged man. "When my wife told me the price of rice, I just didn't believe ber. I went out to see

me," said a young woman who

for myself and she was right."
Betjing vice mayor Wang Baosen assured residents there is no sbortage of grain, meat and vegetables, and he said shops that raised prices beyond

state limits would be punished. China abolished price controls on grain and cooking oil only this past May. A system of grain rationing that existed for more than 40 years was abolished and all residents had to face the laws of the free marketplace.

put the controls back on, at least temporarily.

Through stabilising the market prices, we can ease the pain on residents who go shopping during the new year and the spring festival," said Beij-ing Communist Party Secretary Chen Xitong.

Spring festival, the lunar new year, is the time for the year's major buying spree for most Chinese. It is in early

Fehruary. Officials are blaming this year's buge price rises on misunderstandings about econo-

mic reforms. Many farmers bave not handed in their grain yet in anticipation of higher prices next year. In addition, consumers, worned that Jan. 1 tax reforms would fuel inflation. started their buying early. Sbops raised their prices in

Mr. Zhn. vice premier and bead of the central hank, promised China's bold marketstyle economic reforms would not mean an end to affordable food. ·

The large increase in the price of grain at the end of November was abnormal, transient and caused by psycholo-gical factors," be said.

"There are no market economies in the world that would completely ignore prices in the marketplace, especially the price of grain, which is a basic part of people's lives and social stability," Mr. Zhu said.

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 22, 1993 By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

HOROSCOPE

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Refuse to get involved in any petty details or squabbles at work that are proving annoying to others. In the evening arrange a detailed course of action whereby you have-happiess and more effective.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Your affairs today include your relations with those about you who are in need of some encouragement and realisation that they are really loved.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Think about what you can do to be of greter service to whom every you know who is having a difficult time and in which case you become a real humanitarian. GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) A day to decide the various persons you wish to see during the boli-days and to make plans to be with them at social affairs you all

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Home matters should have the greatest amount of your attention so get your residence in perfect condition for the holidays

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You need to get those last minute duties and shopping done what you have put off and pursue so doing eventhough there is a Christmas rush to deal with. VIRGO: (August 22 to Septem-

ber 22) Good to first analyse

your assets and liabilities, then

decide just how much you can spend and for what purpose so as not to drain your resources. LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Your day to decide your own part which you can best play in the high drains of this holiday

season and get yourself in the pink of condition to do so. SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) The behind the scenes and intimate matters you have not gotten attended to can be approached and put bebind

you in a efficient manner now. SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) A day to consider your friends and acquaintances needs rather then some four-four present in getting something to remember the season by.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Get out in the world and handle those holiday prob-lems that have built up and require some special thought and action and you do well.

. Dhopp

AQUARJUS: (January 21 to February 19) You have some new comers in your life that you want to impress and it will re-quire more than usual focus upon their desire to please them.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Rely upon your best judg-ment and not your intuitive perception in making any impor-tant holiday decisions whether for companions or of a business

Peanuts



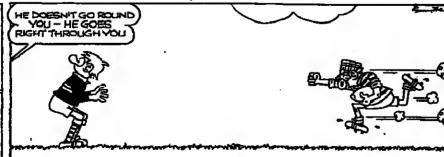






Andy Capp

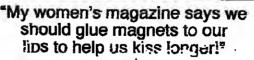


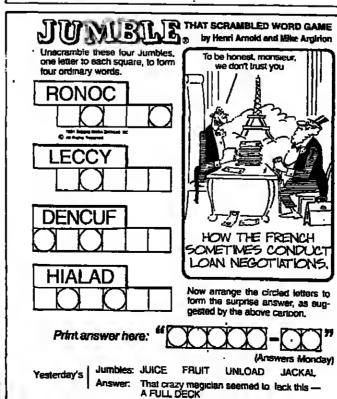


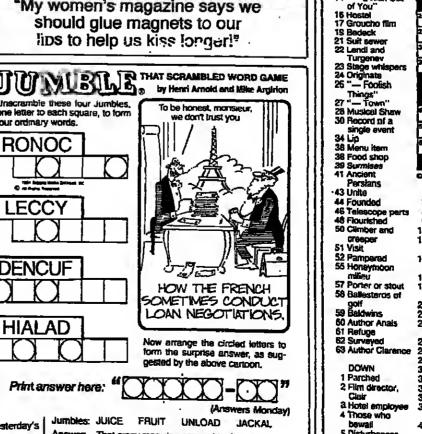
Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF, By Harris HARRIS.

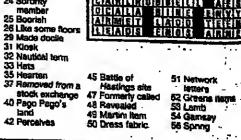


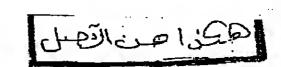




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THE Daily Crossword by Wilson McBeeth





South Africa opens first arms export office in UAE

Africa, back in the Middle East after a boycott lasting decades, has set up its first international arms office in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to break into the lucrative market in the region.

Office director Peter Greeling said the state-owned weapons giant Armscor opened the office in Abu Dhabi last month and it covered the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and other countries in the Middle East.

"It is South Africa's first arms office in the world." Mr. Greeling told AFP. "It will coordinate arms sales to the region and identify opportunities for military cooperation."

The project coincides with fence systems. plans by GCC states to bolster South Africa their armies following the Gulf war. Military experts said the six members were expected to spend more than \$5 billion annually on defence up to the year 2000.

The United States. France and Britain will probably by the main beneficiaries of such plans, as they already dominate the Middle East arms

However, South Africa participated in a ground arms show in Abu Dhabi early this year and sent representatives of more than 30 companies to an international air show in Dubai last month to exhibit helicopters and other air de-

South African officials said they were negotiating with some Gulf countries to sell the

Rooivalk, one of the most advanced helicopters in the world. We are optimistic about

deals." Mr. Greeling said. "We are not competitive in some types of weapons because ours are expensive. But we are competitive in artillery. which is the best in the world. We also have the Rooivalk.

The GCC states - Saudi Arabia. Bahrain. Oman. Oatar, Kuwait and the UAE lifted the boycott against South Africa two years ago after sweeping reforms by President F.W. de Klerk to dismantle apartheid.

Several GCC officials have visited Pretoria. while South African delegations have gone to the Gulf to discuss economic cooperation and investment.

South Africa opened its first Gulf embassy in Bahrain last month and is planning to set up a commercial centre in Dubai to promote exports.

Bilateral trade has risen dramatically since they normalised ties, exceeding \$30 million in the first nine months of 1993. According to official figures

trade was negligible while sanctions were in force, and most exchanges involved secret arms and oil deals. International isolation during apartheid prompted South Africa to develop its own milit-

ary industries, with arms pro-duction reaching nearly \$2 bil-

lion in 1992. We have become major arms exporters, although we did not have arms offices around the world. We used to send marketeers to visit countries wishing to buy weapons from South Africa," Mr.

Greeling said.

Low oil prices not to hit Iran plans, Rafsanjani says

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian President Akhar Hashemi Rafsanjani Tuesday presented the annual hudget hill and a fiveyear plan to parliament and said Iran could continue its development plan despite low oil prices.

"Iran is not reliant on cruc oil prices as other petroleum exporting countries are." the Iranian news agency IRNA quoted Mr. Rafsanjani as telling parliament.

Iran could continue with its development plans regardless of oil prices, he was quoted as

Iran, which has been earning about 85 per cent of its hard cash from crude oil sales in recent years, has been hit hard by the 30 per cent fall in oil prices this year.

Parliament Speaker Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri was quoted as saying Monday that the legislature wanted to post-

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ness Day. -

pone the start of the five-year plan for a year." because one cannot study a plan in a crisis."

The budget and the plan. which is Iran's second five-year development plan since the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, are both for periods starting March 21, 1994.

The plan sets total government expenditure of 238.5 trillion rivals - the equivalent of \$151.9 billion at the assumed exchange rate of 1.570 rivals per dollar, and 26.6 per cent more than the first plan's approved total.

Oil revenue is to meet 51 per cent of the total, or \$77.5 billion, according to planning. chief Massoud Roghani Zan-

Mr. Rafsanjani said Iran had reduced its reliance on oil and urged parliament deputies and the media to focus on the achievements of the first plan and "avoid solely magnifying

Celebrate at

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the existing economic problems." IRNA said.

Critics say the first plan has failed in major areas including promoting industrial exports and privatisation, and that the recent oil price fall highlighted just how dependent Iran's economy still was on the commod-

Iranian officials said the country has \$8 billion in arrears in its commercial debts out of a total \$28 billion of foreign commitments.

A set of guidelines for the second plan by supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei to Mr. Rafsanjani, reported hy IRNA on Monday, called for measures to "prevent the na-tion's relying on foreign loans. and striving to gradually get rid of outstanding obligations."

Mr. Rafsanjani sald Ayutollah Khamenei's views were incorporated in the plan. But it was not immediately clear

whether provisions for using foreign credit has been kept in

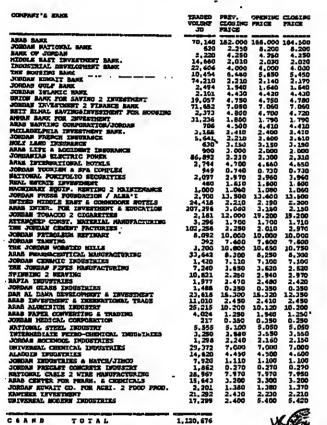
the blueprint. The first draft of the plan before it was discussed in the cabinet, authorised the govern ment to seek up to \$2.4 billion in long-term foreign loans to build four dams

Next year's budget sets tota government expenditure a 33.8 billion riyals, 32.9 per cen more than the current year

approved level. The expenditure figure in equal to \$21.3 billion at the plan's assumed exchange rate but converted at Tuesday! bank rate of 1,751 riyals per dollar it would amount to \$19...

billion: Tehran Radio quoted Mr. Rafsanjani as saying the plan envisaged average unqual growth of between 5.4 per and 6.0 per cent in the gross domestic product.

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Financial Markets

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Cairo Amman Bank U.S. Dollar in International Markets

TOTAL

Currency	New York Close Imac20/12/93	Tokyo Close Itale21/12/93
Sterling Pound	1.4865	1.4875
Deutsche Mark	1.7129	1.7113
Swiss Franc	1.4580	1.4550
French Franc	5.8380	5.8180**
Japanese Yen	110.60	110.75
European Curreny Unit	1.1288	1.1315**
USD Per STU		

entocurrency interes	t Rates		Date: 21/	72/1993
Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.18	3.25	5.31	3.62
Sterling Pound	5.68	5.43	5.19	5.06
Deutsche Mark	6.43	6.12	5.75	5.31
Swiss Franc	4.43	4.12	3.93	3.68
French Franc	6.59	6.44	6.03	5.56
Japanese Yen	2.31	2.00	1 81	1 61

	,				-
Precions !	Vietals			Date: 21/	12/1993
Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USO/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	388.25	7-50	Silver	5.11	0.115

6.81 6.37 6.00

21/12/1993

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7020	0.7040
Sterling Pound	1.0432	1.0484
Deutsche Mark	0.4098	0.4118
Swiss Franc	0.4822	0.4844
French Franc	0.1203	0.1209
Japanese Yen*	0.6330	0.6362
Dutch Guilder	0.3662	0.3680
Swedish Krona	*****	£###
Italian Ura	0.0419	0.0421
Belgian Franc	4444	*****

Other Correncies	Date: 21/12/199			
Ситему	Bid	Offer		
Bahraini Dipar	1.8370	1.8710		
Lebanesc Lira	0.040575	0.041635		
Saudi Riyal	0.1855	0.1885		
Kuwaiti Dinar	2,2250	2.3200		
Qatari Riyal	0.1902	0.1916		
Egyptian Pound	0.2050	0.2220		
Omani Riyat	1.7900	1.8250		
UAE Dirham	0.1902	0-1916		
Greek Druchma	0.2815	0.3245		
Cypriet Pound	1.3475 -	1.3965		

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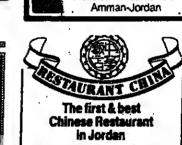
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U.N. suspends Sarajevo airlift

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — The United Nations suspended its humanitarian airlift to Sarajevo Tuesday after one of its planes was hit hy heavy machinegun fire while landing in the besieged Bosnian capital the previous day.
"The humanitarian airlift of

the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has heen suspended, we don't know for how long," said U.N.
spokesman Major Idesbald Van Biesebroeck.

In Geneva, UNHCR spokesman Ron Redmond said the aid effort would be resumed only when there were assurances there would be no more such incidents.

He said the suspension was ordered in the wake of Monday's shooting "and a number 1 of other serious incidents over the past few weeks."

The decision was taken reluctantly, he said, adding: "The airlift is absolutely crucial to keep this city alive."

He said a Soviet-made Ilyushin 76 transport plane operated by the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Bosnia was hit by six bullets.

damaging its fuel tanks.

A U.N. spokesman in Zagreb said the bullets pierced a wing and entered the cahin area but the flight crew escaped injury.

Repairs were made on the ground and the plane took off for its return flight to Zagreh

Maj. Van Biesehroeck said the shots appeared to come from Ilidza, a Serb-controlled western suburb of Sarajevo hut

he declined to hlame any one

of Bosnia's warring factions for

the incident. Fierce fighting hetween Muslim-led government troops and rebel Serb forces erupted in Sarajevo's western suhurbs Tuesday, further endangering the airlift whose planes swoop

low over the hattlefield area while taking off and landing. The U.N. spokesman said 118 artillery impacts had been recorded in the suburbs of Stup and Rajlovac between 5 a.m. and 8 a.m. Tuesday and fierce fighting continued late into the

Asked about the significance of the fighting, Maj. Van Biesebroeck replied: "It's difficult to assess. It's probably just a show of force, harassment, before the (Geneva) talks

begin."
Stup, formerly a Croat suburh, has been largely destroyed in months of fighting. Muslim and Serb forces each hold parts of the town, which flanks the airport road along which all of Sarajevo's relief supplies must

Meanwhile, leaders from former Yugoslavia began a new pusb Tuesday to reach a pre-Christmas peace agreement in Bosnia, with interna--tional mediator Lord Owen

expressing qualified confidence on the outcome.

Bosnia's rebel Serh leader Radovan Karadzic was also in upbeat mood, saying: "This time I think we can make it." But Bosnian Croat leader

Mate Boban and the republic's Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic both said they saw little chance of success. Lord Owen said he was

'fairly confident... I hope so. anyway," when he and comediator Thorvald Stoltenberg opened a day of talks at Geneva's Palais Des Nations.

Also taking part were President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia and Franjo Tudiman of Croatia. The mediators were hoping that the two, at a key meeting Tuesday morning, could agree on a new territorial offer to break the deadlock.

On Wednesday, the Bosnian leaders and the mediators will go to Brussels to meet European Community foreign ministers, who are pressing hard for a rapid agreement to end the Bosnian war, now 20 months old.

The mediators and the EC are insisting that the Muslims be given at least one third of the Balkan republic in a proposed three-way split. In return they are prepared gradually to United Nations sanctions

In a separate development,

CAPE TOWN (R) - Lastditch talks to draw right win-Party was only four seats short gers into South Africa's transiof an absolute majority in par-

hament Tuesday, with four-

seats (11.6 per cent).

ion representing ethnic Hunga-rians in Vojvodina five from

two per cent and the Democra-

tic Action Party of Alhanians in southern Serbia three from

.2 per cent. Turnout in Sunday's polling

The Socialists have in-

creased their share of the vote

as counting has progressed,

and were already claiming an

Their showing is a vast im-provement on last year's elec-

tions, when they only obtained

28.77 per cent of the vote and

101 seats, despite an appalling economic situation as a result

of an international embargo

absolute majority Monday.

was around 70 per cent, Elec-tion Commission Chairman

Zoran Jumic said.

against Serbia.

led in Cape Town Tuesday. fifths of the votes counted, the Lack of progress there prompted white Afrikaners to Electoral Commission said. The commission said the put off signing an agreement in Socialists with 48.8 per cent of Johanneshurg that they had reached earlier with the Afrithe vote had secured 122 seats in the 250-seat assembly, fol-lowed by the opposition liberal coalition DEPOS with 44 seats can National Congress (ANC). The ANC, saying it did not want to take over a country

and 17.6 per cent, the ultraunder fire, said it understood nationalist Radical Party with 40 seats and 16 per cent and the Democratic Party with 29 the concerns of Afrikaners who are demanding a homeland in post-apartheid South Africa. The Democratic Party of Afrikaner People's Front Serbia had seven sears from 2.8 (AVF) leader General Conper cent, the Democratie Un-

stand Viljoen told a news conference in Johannesburg that the right-wing Freedom Alliance involved in the sepa-rate talks could have collapsed if he had signed the accord with the ANC to study an Afrikaner homeland.

tion to black majority rule stal-

Gen. Viljoen's front is part of the five-member alliance which has been holding talks with the ANC and the government over whether to take part in the process leading to the country's first non-racial elections next April 27.

Freedom Alliance legislator Tom Langley said they had been unable to reach agreement at the last-minute talks in Cape Town, but had set up a committee to look for a break-

UNITED NATIONS (R) -

The U.N. General Assembly

Monday formally created the

world's first High Commission-

er for Human Rights, a post

under discussion for the past 45

years, to respond quickly to

The decision was unani-

mous, by consensus without a

vote, following several months

of argument in what proved to

be the most contentious issue

of the 48th General Assembly

India's delegate. T.P.

Sreeniyean, called the move

"a historic consensus" and said

he hoped the commissioner

would prevent the issue from

exacerbating differences be-

tween the world's rich and

President Bill Clinton had

made the post a cornerstone of

major rights crises.

U.N. creates human rights commissioner

world human rights."

attention to ahuses.

based in Geneva.

The alliance of hlack and white federalists demands regional autonomy in a postapartheid South Africa and is bers, said the alliance had been boycotting preparations for the

election. The white-dominated parliament is due to vote Wednesday on a draft constitution for the

transition to majority rule. "The ANC were, as always, arrogant and uncompromising as if the country belongs to them and them alone. Mr. Langley said.
Gen. Viljoen, commenting

on the front's decision to postpone the signing of a "interim strategic agreement" with the ANC on the Afrikaner's right to a post-apartheid homeland.

"We feel betrayed, we feel very sorry. The people in Cape Town are not taking us serious-

ANC Assistant Secretary-General Jacob Zuma accepted the AVF decision, saying it was important that white Afrikaner concerns should be

"An ANC government would not like to take over a country under fire. That's why this problem has to be resolved," he said at a joint news

Mr. Zuma said the ANC had also agreed the time was not ripe to sign the agreement with

A member of Zulu chief

Albright has called the resolu-

tion "a major milestone for

The wording of the text is

purposely vague to allow sup-

porters and opponents to inter-

pret it, with the United States

saving the commissioner can

intervene whenever basic free-

doms are being suppressed and

others arguing that the post has definite limitations on calling

Much will depend on whent

Secretary-General Boutros

Ghali appoints to the joh.

which will be on the level of an

undersecretary-general and be

The commissioner's man-

date includes "engaging in dia-

loone with all governments in

the implementation of his her

mandate with a view to seem-

its U.N. policy, and U.S. ing respect for all human unable to react quickly to Ambassador Madelsone a rights. The many that the rights crises should a very

Hunter who shot Efforts to woo S. Africa's right stall lynx agrees to find another Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party, one of the Freedom Alliance mem-

willing Tuesday to drop its

demand for separate national

and regional ballots in return

for greater flexibility on de-

mands for regional autonomy.

issues were not discussed in

Cape Town as the three parties

wrangled ahout a joint govern-

ment and an ANC demand for

an up-front commitment from

the alliance to participate in, or

facilitate, the election if their

He said the ANC demand

had been framed in terms de-

signed to insult right-wing

leaders. "It reflects on our

integrity. What they want is

something to humiliate us and

to trample on us."

Gen. Viljoen in Johannes-

burg told reporters he re-

mained committed to the

agreement with the ANC

though would not go ahead

until "the political impasse to

Cape Town has been re-

Mr. Zuma addressed the

"We believed and we still

news conference with a note of

believe that this agreement

sends a clear message to all

South Africans that we can

reach a settlement without

going the route of the blood-bath," he said.

Many Third World nations

objected vigorously to creating the post at all, and Echador's

amhassador, Jose Ayala Lasso.

is credited with hammering out

The London-based human

rights group Amnesty Interna-

tinnal welcomed the post as an

advance. But it expressed dis-

appointment that states failed

to give explicit guidance as to

how the commissioner would

damental to human rights

work," the group said in a

At present, the Geneva-

based U.N. Human Rights

Commission meets only once a

year for two months to hear

complaints and then assign in-

accused of ahuses. But it is

unable to react quickly to a

vestigations to some countries

Ohviously, this issue is fun-

act in rights emergencies.

compromise draft.

solved.

optimism.

demands were met.

Mr. Langley said specific

DUBAI (R) - A hunter who shot dead a rare lynx in the mountains of the United Arab Emirates has agreed to try to find its mate to start a captive hreeding programme, a daily newspaper said Tnesday. The hunter tracked and shot the male caracal lynx because it was preying on domestic goats, the Emirates News said. The Arabian Leopard Trust suggested he capture its mate to help preserve the species in captivity and the hunter welcomed the idea, it added. The: trust is a non-governmental organisation trying to preserve

Mother comes out of coma to hold baby girl

LONDON (AFP) - A young mother who gave birth while in a coma after a car accident has recovered sufficiently to meet the baby girl she never knew existed, and should be able to spend Christmas with her, doctors said here Monday. Melanie Douglas, 22, suffered a fractured skull and brain damage when she was hit by a car in January near her home close to Birmingham, England. When she was taken to hospital, doctors discovered she was: eight weeks pregnant. "Melanie started to come out of the coma when she went into labour," and gave birth, nine weeks premature, in June, her mother Marie Langley said. When she was allowed to hold her baby daughter for the first time, "she just beamed all over her face," her mother said. The young mother can talk fully but is still partially paralysed. She will be able to spend Christmas at home with her daughter before resuming rehabilitation at a head injuries unit, doctors

ANTWERP, Belgium (AFP)

tiger cubs

two tiger cubs that were refused milk by their mother, the Nation newspaper reported Tuesday. Thongkham nursed the cubs along with her own six puppies at a zoo in Lop Buri, 150 kilometres north of Bang-kok, the newspaper said. "She is a very kind dog and has a good heart," the paper quoted Thongkham's owner as saying.

1st Japanese woman ordained as priest

WELLINGTON (AFP) - At first Junko Monica Preston's husband couldn't believe his wife's ambition, but she was determined to be the first Japanese woman to become an Anglican priest. Preston is now priest-assistant at the Wellington Cathedral of Saint Paul where earlier this month she was ordained by Archbishop Brian Davis. "The archhishop saw may calling and encooraged me," she said Tuesday. Preston arrived in New Zealand from England in 1989 with her hosband Thomas, a former British diplomat, "Tom is very supportive - he couldn't believe it when I first said I was called, but he fully appreciates

on Serbia.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Poll: Clinton's approval rating up

WASHINGTON (R) - A new poll said President Bill Clinton's approval rating has jumped nine points in the past month, largely hecause of his handling of the: economy. The ABC News/Washington Post poll said 58 per cent of American's approve of the way Mr. Clinton is handling his jnb, up from 49 per cent Nov. 14. At the same time, the president's rating on the economy jumped 10 points in a month, to 53 per cents the poll said. A statement from ABC News said this jump "seems largely responsible for Mr. Clinton's overall positive ratings." The poll also noted that Mr. Clinton got a good score on the way he is dealing with the situation in Russia, with 68 per cent approving. The ABC News/ Washington Post poll was based on telephone interviews with 1.000 adults from Dec. 15-19, a few days after a parliamentary election in Russia produced surprisingly strong support for Consmunist and ultra-nationalist parties. The poll had a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 per cent.

France moves closer to NATO

PARIS (AFP) — France is returning to the bosom of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), but by decrees and on condition the Atlantic alliance reforms itself. For the first time since President Charles De Gaulle pulled his country out of NATO's integrated command in 1966, Paris is considering having its defence minister and armed forces chief of staff take part in NATO deliberations, Defence Minister François Leofard said Sunday. The move is prompted by increasing NATO involvement in peacekeeping operations, such as in Yugoslavia, where France is heavily committed. "It is entirely normal that the defence minister sits in on" the NATO council "and the Joint Chief of Staff in the military committee when the subject can affect France and its armed forces," said Mr. Leojard. New NATO missions, notably in peacekeeping, and the increased role in Europe in the alliance will be the main themes of a special NATO summit scheduled for Jan. 10 in

IRA injures 2 in Belfast bomb

BELFAST (R) - The IRA wounded two people in a Belfast bomh attack Monday night to warn Britain that the guerrillas have yet to end their 25-year war and accept an Anglo-Irish peace package. The Irish Republican Army (IRA) quickly claimed responsibility for the bombing, the first time it has admitted an attack since Britain and Ireland unveiled three peace plan last Wednesday. The plan calls on the 1RA and Protestant extremists to lay down their arms in return for a place at peace talks and recognition that people in both Northern I reland and I reland should determine the future of the troubled province. A soldier and a civilian were injured in Monday's attack, the second major bumb in Northern Ireland since British Prime Minister John Major and Irish Premier Albert Reynolds launched their initiative last Wednesday.

Aristide talks with U.S. officials

WASHINGTON (R) - Ousted Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide held talks Monday on ways to restore democracy to his country and a top U.S. official urged him to reconsider a national reconciliation conference. Mr. Aristide, the Caribbean flation's first democratically elected president, met officials from the United States, France, Canada and Venezuela Monday to try to hreak Haiti's political deadlock. We discussed the current diplomatic situation and explored with President Aristide the ways that the current impasse might be resolved." State Department spokeswoman Christian Shelly said at a briefing. In the Haitian capital, radio stations quoted remarks from what they said was a highly critical letter from Haiti Prime Minister Robert Malval to Mr. Aristide a day before the prime minsiter tendered his resignation last week. The radio reports quoted Mr. Malval as accusing Mr. Arisude of lacking trust in his own prime minister and repeatedly promising to support an initiative only to change his mind, withdraw support, or fail to carry through.

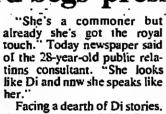
Prince Edward begs press to lay off him, girlfriend

ward asked Britain's media to leave him and his new girlfriend alone, but her likeness to Princess Diana appears to have boosted interest in the new face on the royal scene.

Queen Elizabeth's youngest son pleaded for privacy in a rare letter to editors and urged them not to hound Sophie Rhys-Jones after their relationship was unveiled at the weekend.

Photographers and reporters have pursued her, delighted that her blonde bob hairstyle smile and gait bring instant reminders of Prince Edward's sister-in-law. Diana. who bowed out from public life last week saying she could not take the media pressure.

Me and my Di. read the headline in Tuesday's tabloid Daily Star. The Sun called her.
"Di-dentical."



the appearance of Ms. Rhys-Jones seemed too good to be true for tabloid editors, until the prince sent them all a fax asking them to leave the pair alone

The balding bachelor prince. 29, said he wanted to stop the press "destroying that part of my life that I am entitled to regard as private and, more importantly, sophie's life."

"We are not planning to get married — we only met each other in the last few months but we are good friends. If this changes, we will let you know in a proper and formal manner." he said to scotch rumours



Sophie Rhys-Jones, fatest girlfriend of Prince Edward, gels into her car after leaving her London office (AFP photo)

China opposes oil embargo on N. Korea BELIING (Agencies) — China. consent of China, one of five permanent members of the tiations failed.

ure for an oil embargo against North Korea, saying it still favours talks to rid the Korean

peninsula of nuclear weapons. A Foreign Ministry spokes-woman said Beijing did not favour "exerting pressure and intensifying the contradictions" between North Korea

and U.S.-backed South Korea. She reiterated China's call for a negotiated denuclearisation of the entire peninsula. White House Chief of Staff Thomas McLarty said Sunday the United Nations would be pressed for an oil embargo if

talks failed to open North Korea's nuclear facilities to international inspection. South Korea and its allies fear the Stalinist North is close? to building a nuclear bomb. It denies this but has refused to

open two sites at Yongbyon to international inspectors. Sanctions would require the permanent members of the Security Council. Beijing, long a close ally of the Communist government in Pyongyang, has come under pressure to use its

influence on North Korea. The Foreign Ministry spokeswoman would not comment on hints by U.S. Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen that China's support for denuclearisation in North Korea might pay dividends in Beiiing's trade disputes with

Washington.
Mr. Bentsen said Sunday that persistent U.S. reminders to China of its crucial trade finks with the United States

ton still intended to continue talks with Pyongyang to try to persuade it to comply with agreements to curb nuclear

were having a "great deal of influence" on Beijing. Mr. McLarty said Washing-

proliferation hut sanctions were being considered if nego-

statement.

Economic sanctions could prove a harsh weapon against North Korea, which admits its economy is in crisis.

Japan and China share concerns over North Korea's alleged nuclear weapons programme and the Japanese asked the Chinese to try to persuade the North to resolve the dispute, a Foreign Ministry spokesman in Tokyo said uesday.

Pyongyang's latest response to U.S. proposals to resolve the nuclear row represented some progress.

The response from the North was made during Monday's talks in New York between U.S. and North Korean officials.

"The message is getting across, there is some improvement - there are some points we must study, but it fell short of expectations," a Foreign Ministry official said.

S. Korea makes major cabinet changes

SEQUL (R) — South Korea's President Kim Young Sam replaced 14 ministers Tuesday in a sweeping cabinet reshuffle designed to restore his credibility after breaking election campaign promises to bar rice im-

In the higgest shake-up of the 24-member cabinet since he became the nation's first civilian president in more than three decades in February, Mr. Kim dismissed his chief economic planner as well as ministers of defence, unification, interior and agriculture,

The way for the reshuffle was set Thursday when Hwang In-Sung resigned as prime minister, saying he was taking the hlame for failing to prevent the rice market opening, He was replaced the same

day by Lee Hoi-Chang, who has spearheaded Mr. Kim's anti-corruption drive. Transport Minister Chung Jai-Suk will replace Mr. Lee Kyung-Shick as new deputy

premier and head of the economic planning board. Mr. Chung's promotion made room at transport for Oh Myung, former communications minister and chief orea-

niser of the 1993 Taejon World Contrary to expections, Mr. Kim retained Finance Minister Hong Jae-Hyong and Trade Minister Kim Chul-Sn, moves seen by analysts as demonstrating his desire to maintain curreut economic policies.

farmers and students.

A presidential spokesman said Tuesday's cabinet shakeup was made "to cope with new economic order following. round of trade talks."

tinne his administrative reforms and the cabinet would be asked to make the country more competitive internationally.

fessor at a Seoul University who once served as a chief negotiator in talks with the Communist North, Mr. Kim retained Foreign

Minister Han Sung-Joo and Kim Deok, head of the Agency for National Security Planning, the spokesman said.

The Defence Ministry has recently been under fire for an alleged multimillion dollar arms procurement swindle.

The president has ordered a thorough probe into the case, in which a foreign arms dealer was alleged to have defrauded the ministry of \$6.67 million by failing to deliver ammunition paid for by a branch of the Korea Exchange Bank in

Hyung-Woo. Woo, a five-term legislator regarded as one of Mr. Kim's closest confidants, will become the new interior minister, replacing Lee Hae-Koo.

Among others dropped from the cabinet were Agriculture Minister Hun Shin-Haeng. Labour Minister Rhee In-Je, Construction Minister Koh Byung-Woo, Education Minister Oh Byung-Moon and En-vironment Minister Whang San-Sung.

Mr. Kim, who has pursued a tough campaign to clean np corruption and administrative abuses, is expected to extend his administrative shakeup to the top ranks of his ruling Democratic Liberal Party.

Four senior party officials, including Secretary-General Hwang Myung-Soo, tendered their resignations Monday, clearing the way for a

3 hurt in crash with Christmas tree thieves

- Three people were injuredwhen thieves with a stolen Christmas tree in their jeep inmped several red lights and collided with two other cars near here, police said. One of the injured men was in the getaway car. Police said the thieves took off in a hurry with their lights off after officers surprised them while they were loading a large pine tree which they had stolen from a suburban shop into their jeep. Two of the injured, including the one in the thieves' car,

Thieves rob old woman, then call for help

SYDNEY (R) — Two masked thieves bound, gagged and robbed an 83-year-old woman in her Sydney home Tuesday before, dialling an emergency number for her and calling for belp, Australian police said. The men forced open a window and woke the woman in the middle of the night. They took several hundred dollars from her purse, bound her with tape and tied her to the bed, a spokesman said. They disconnected her telephone but later called an emergency number from another phone to get her help. Police said the woman was shaken but not harmed during the robbery.

Thal dog nurses

BANGKOK (R) — A Thai dog has successfully nursed



Prince Edward gestures to the waiting media as he leaves his office late Monday (AFP photo)

that a summer wedding was planned.

In a direct reference to the broken marriages of his hrothers Prince Charles and Prince Andrew, Prince Edward said media scrutiny of his family had "nnt been at all beneficial to their relationships.

Sophie and me and allow us to try to carry on our lives as normal," he said. appealing to the spirit of Christmus good-Prince Edward sent the message by fax from the offices of the new television production

he has set up but when he tried

to leave work he found his car

Please will you call an end

to your harassment of hoth

trapped hy photographers' vehicles. The constant glare of publicity was partly blamed for the brenk-up last year of Diana's 1981 marriage to heir in the throne Prince Charles, and for the separation 18 mnnths ago of Prince Andrew and flamehaired Sarah Ferguson, known

The paper that enraged Prin-

cess Diana by showing sneaked

pictures of her working out in a

gym said it would respect

as Fergie.

Prince Edward's wishes. "Naturally the Daily Mirror would not dream of harassing him or his friend Sophie Rhys-Jones, editor David Banks said. We will not be pointing cameras over fences or through

hedges.

advised Prince Edward to learn from his brothers' mistake to make sure his relationship went well. The shy Prince Edward has until now escaped much of the royal spotlight, despite being described as a "wimp" for quit-

ting the tough Royal Marines

in 1987 for a jnb in the theatre.

Its circulation rival, the Sun.

In 1990 he was forced to deny persistent rumours he was homosexual despite having dated a string of actresses. European princesses and television personalities, He and Ms. Rhys-Jones are.

said to have met at a charity

tennis event and to have spent

weekends at Buckingham Palace together. The queen is reported to have met her son's girlfriend, and royal watchers say the couple will join the rest of the royal family at Sandringham for New Year celebrations.

Local news media had speculated most of Mr. Kim's key economic ministers would be replaced to spread the blame for the rice market opening under the GATT world trade deal, which provoked widespread protests by

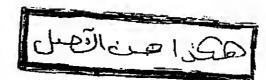
the settlement of Uruguay He said Mr. Kim would con-

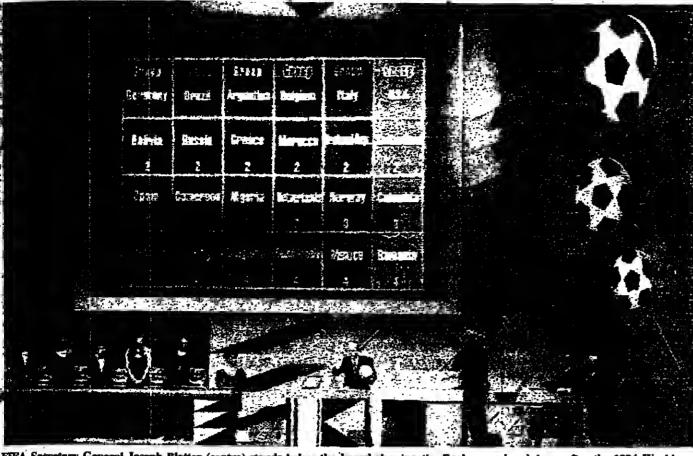
The new unification minister will be Lee Yung-Dug, a pro-

Rhee Byoung-Tae, a former general who previously headed he Agency for Patriots and Veterans Affairs, will become the new defence minister in

place of Kwon Young-Hae.

المهارًا من الأحل





FIFA Secretary-General Joseph Blatter (centre) stands below the board showing the final group breakdown after the 1994 World Cup final draw in Las Vegas (AFP photo)

ited States and Mexico turned

boycotted the media and Vogts

made a fierce attack on the

officials due to take charge of

their last match in Mexico

are normally cordial with the

press, refused to come to a

scheduled news conference

saying the criticism in the Ger-

man media had been too harsh

United States.

after their 3-0 victory over the

Vogts said he had made an

official protest to soccer's

world governing body FIFA

about Mexico's decision to

appoint two Mexican linesmen

for their friendly Wednesday.

for us having to read this critic-

ism for months on end," Ger-

man captain Lothar Matthaeus

a spanner in the works of the

whole team. That is putting

our sporting success in danger

and we are not going to let that

Vogts was clearly annoyed

by the affair which has sudden-

ly upset morale in the German

camp on a tour which he sees

as vital preparation for next year's World Cup. His frustra-

iion spilled over into an attack on the Mexicans over the lines-

"You lot are trying to throw

told reporters sternly.

happen.

"Don't you think it is hard

All the German team, who

Vogts keeps team under wraps before Mexico clash

MEXICO CITY (R) — German coach Berti Vogts is refusing to give away much arout fusing to give away inches day's his line-up for Wednesday's clash with Mexico in the last friendly of the World Champions' 10-day tour.

Vogts's team face an awesome task at high altitude in front of more than 100,000 fanatical Mexicans at the Aztec Stadium, the venue for the World Cup finals in both 1970 -- and 1986_

The German coach does not want to give his opponents too much information in advance. Asked by German journalists whether he could confirm rumours that he would play midfielder Andy Moeller in a out-and-out striker's role. Vogts said late Monday: "That

has to be translated (into Spanish for the Mexican journal-ists). So I can't answer that." All the German squad are fit apart from reserve striker mer should return in defence. Bernd Hobsch who has which is expected to include game is the final test on a tour... Spanish-hased striker Hugo to the U.S. and Mexico which the Germans are using as key preparation for next year's.

World Cup in the United

States.

Vogts admitted he planned to play VFB Stuttgart's Thomas Strunz on the right of midfield and rest Thomas Haessler who has proved himself in the two other matches of the tour - a 2-1 defeat by Argentina and a 3-0 victory over the U.S.

Ortlieb hopes for super-G win

GOREN BRIDGE

WEEKLY BRDGE QUIZ

LECH, Austria (R) — Local hero Patrick Ortlieh will be out to crown his first Alpine Skiing World Cup win last week hy wrapping up a super-G victory Wednesday as a Christmas gift for his home town.

But the stocky 26-year-old. who learnt to ski in Lech's Arlberg Mountains, will have to put his local knowledge to best use to stave off a tough challenge from compatriot Guenther Mader and Olympic super-G champion Kjetil-

WITH CHAR SHARIF

Q. I—Neither vulnerable, as South

you hold:

+Q5 VA VAJIO65 +KQ984

The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East

Q.2—Both vulnerable, as South

you hold:
49543 VA72 06532 485
Partner opens the bidding with two
no trump, showing 21-22 points.
What action do you take?

Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you

hold: •AJ6 - \$K9852 \ \cdot \c

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 O Page 1 C Page

2 O Page 2

What action do you take?

.

What do you bid now?

Pass 1.9 Pass Pass 2 2 Pass

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1 19 mg

1 22

andre Aamodt of Norway. Ortlieh is glowing with confidence after scoring the best result of his six-year World Cup career in a downhill race at Val Gardena in Italy last Saturday. a victory which quashed any suggestions that his Olympic downhill triumph in 1992 was a

Now the Austrian wants to make up for crashing out of the season's first super-G at Val D'Isere in France just over a

Q.4-As South, vuinerable, you

AJ105 ♥AQJ5 ◆8 AKQ72

Q.5-Neither vulnerable, as South you hold: 27 VARQ109 VAQJ 4J1095

The bidding has proceeded: South West North East 1 ♥ Pass 1 NT Pass

Q.6-As South, vulnerable, you

+732 CAKQJ105 ↓KQ6 +5

Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one no trump (16-

18 points). What action do you take?

The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 2 Pass 1 2 Pass

What do you bid now?

What do you bid now?

But apart from confirming that Bodo Illgner would play his second match of the tour in goal and Bayern Munich's Christian Ziege would replace Andreas Brehme as expected on the left flank, Vogts kept

everybody wondering.
The likelihood is that Vogts will make several changes from the team that struggled to hreak down a defensive American side in Stanford Stadium. California, Saturday.

Apart from Strunz and Ziege. Moeller is likely to move up to join Juergen Klinsmann in attack with former East German Matthias Sammer taking over his attacking role in midfield just behind the two strikers.

Forward Stefan Kuntz, who scored on his dehut against the Americans, will probably start the match on the hench. Bayern Munich's Thomas Hel-Sanchez and Luis Garcia, With the conditions in their favour. the Mexicans have a superb chance to deal the world champions only their second defeat

of the year. Vogts was concerned that the altitude problem would hinder the Germans: "Anybody who has been out for a jog here or gone up a few hundred steps knows what we

"The Mexicans have an almost perfect offside trap and are up against," he said. I'm very disappointed that we have two Mexican linesmen for Germany's tour of the Unthe game," the German coach siad. "That's not fair."

"We have made a protest to FIFA and they have sent a fax to the Mexican Federation. We have had no answer yet ...Looking at the (linesmen) situation and with their offside trap, all you have to say (to our team) is 'best of luck, lands'."

Acrimony seems to strike the German team whenever they visit Mexico. The last time they boycotted the media was at the 1986 World Cup after a German tahloid alleged some

of the players had been out on sour Monday when the players a wild night on the town.

As soothing violins played in the background at an official reception at a central Mexico City hotel Monday evening. the players coolly turned their backs on reporters and refused 10 make any comments about Wednesday's game.

The German media was crirical of the world champions' inability to break down a largeweak U.S. team in Stanford Stadium. Two of the goals came from set pieces.

The performance followed a 2-1 defeat hy Argentina in the opening match of the 10-day tour in Miami, the world champions' first loss for a year.



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Celebrations and gloom follow World Cup draw in Las Vegas

LONDON (AP) - Like with most people who visit Las Vegas, there were winners and

The Spaniards were in a fiesta mood. The Irish were on their way to the bars to drown their sorrows.

It may have been a mindboggling way to perform a World Cup draw, but Sunday's ceremony created delight and dismay around the world even though no ooe has played a game yet.

Brazil, co-favourite with Germany to win the trophy, was hardly ecstatic at having to face three tough opponents, Cameroon Sweden.

"In other groups, you have an idea of who will qualify," head coach Carlos, Alberto Parreira said. "But in ours it's hard to say.

"It's a good, strong group," said forward Bebeto, who plays in Spain for Deportivo La Coruna. "It's a good test to see if we can reach the title or not.

Theo the Brazilians looked over at Argentina to see the 1990 runner up had to face Greece, Nigeria and Bulgaria, all comparative weaklings in World Cup terms.

"We can't complain because we get to face these teams," Argentina's largest-circulation daily Cronica said. "And, if it goes as we suppose. Argentina should advance without major problems,"

The Nigerians aren't frightened of meeting Diego Maradona and the rest of the Argen-

"People talk about Argentina. I don't think there's anything special about them," said Babayo Shehu, director general of Nigeria's National Sports Commission.

"This is the World Cup. Anything could happen... We are not going to be thinking about Argentina and forget that we need points from our other matches to qualify. I'm optimistic we will qualify."

Italy, rated third favourite, also is in a difficult group along with Ireland, Norway and Mexico. "It has gone very badly as

usual," coach Arrigo Sacchi said. "But difficult enterprises thrill me. He who has grand ideas must beat everyone. I am

Ireland has lost all its seven meetings with Italy, including in the quarterfinals in 1990. "No luck of the draw for Irish," headlined the Irish Times. "It's New York, New Yori for unlucky Irish," the paper said, reflecting the fact

to be staged at Boston to attract a large Irish following. Mexico was upbeat about the prospect of a rare chance to tackle the Europeans.

that Ireland wanted its games

"We areo't afraid to take on European teams such as Norway, Ireiand and Italy. If we want to go all the way what better than to take oo the big

ones at the start," said Mexico midfielder Garcia Aspe. "Italy will be the team to Spain didn't mind being

drawn in the same group as defending champion Germany because it was confident of beating the other two teams in the group, Bolivia and South Korea.

"OK" splashed the Madridbased sports daily Marca io giant capital letters. "None of the groups is easy but, yes, I can say I am hap-

said Spanish national team coach Javier Clemente. German coach Berti Vogts was in no mood to underesti-

mate anvone. "Remember, bolivia beat Brazil and Uruguay. And we'll have problems with South

Korea because we don't know their style of play." he said. Team captain Lothar Mattheaus agreed, "Bolivia and South Korea ar blank pages for us. But they must have streogths or they wouldn't

The Americans were seeded because they are to host the tournament and therefore avoided the likes of Germany. Brazil, Argentina, Italy and

have qualified.

The down side of that was being drawn against three more teams they will struggle to beat, Swifterland, Colombia and Romania.
"The United States clearly is

the weakest of the seeded teams, said switzerland's English coach, noy Hodgson.

"I feel good about the opponents and about the venues, which should at least have an acceptable climate."
The talented Dutch team

appear to have an easy route 10 the second stage, meeting neighbour Belgium and two teams with little World Cup pedigree, Morocco and Saudi Arahia.

"The hig advantage is that we know Belgium very well but I know absolutely nothing about the other two teams." Dutch coach Dick Advocaat, asked to stay on in charge of the team now that Johan Cruyff is not taking the joh .-

Soccer officials from around the globe dashed across the United States Monday to pick their training sites for the 1994

It wasn't exactly like the Los-Angeles Dodgers heading off Vero Beach, Fla., every-Februaryy to start the season. In international soccer, everyy-! thing is a production, withmonths spent analysing the most minute detail.

Compagnoni's French love affair blossoms errors oo the middle section to

TIGNES, France (R) — De-borah Compagnoni's love affair with France blossomed Sunday as she grabbed her first World Cup giant slalom victory thanks to a storming second

The fourth major triumph of Compagnoni's career, all achieved on French pistes, was one of the toughest as the Italian skier had to overcome a considerable first leg lead set hy Anita Wachter.

The Austrian overall World Cup leader, going for her third giant slalom victory of the season, looked poised for victory with a 0.44 second advantage over Compagnoni in the first

But Compagnoni gave everthing she had on the second and Wachter made a series of yield to defeat by 0.24 seconds. Olympic giant slalom champioo Pernilla Wiberg of Sweden took third place, more than a second behind the Ita-

Compagnoni, criticised at home for failing to win races in Italy, has twice won World Cup super-G races in Morzine. Fraoce, and earoed her greatest success at last year's Albertville Olympics when she won the super-G gold at

The Olympics provided her with her most painful memory. too, as she fell in the giaot slalom, 24 hours after her gold medal trimph, and sustained a serious knee injury which kept her out of action for months.

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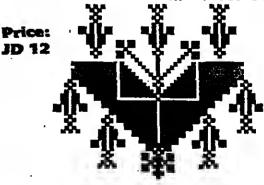
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Algeria to sign nuclear treaty.

ALGIERS (AFP) - Algeria is to sign the nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty, Foreign Minister Mohammad Salah Dembri said Tuesday at the inauguration of the country's second experimental nuclear reactor. "Algeria is acting on the progress made in bilateral nuclear disarmament," said Mr. Dembri, who called for 'progress on the issue of security for non-nuclear states and a (nuclear) test ban." On the Middle East he called for "concrete and determined efforts to create, in this region, a zone free of weapons of mass destruction," which implied all nuclear facilities in the region should only have a civilian use, he said. Earlier education minister Ahmad Djebbar inaugurated the 'Ain Oussera 15-Megawatt nuclear plant, with Chinese help and which was to go on-stream on Tuesday two years after its inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Turkish minister snubs Iranian visitor

ANKARA (AFP) - Security and trade talks between Turkey and Iran wound up here Tuesday in the marked absence of Turkish Deputy Premier Murat Karayalcin, who refused to meet visiting Iranian first Vice-President Hassan Habihi. Sources close to the government said the deputy premier's boycott was sparked by the refusal of Mr. Hahibi to lay a wreath, as foreign dignitaries generally do, at the mausoleum of Kemal Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkey as a lay state. Mr. Habihi's talks with Prime Minister Tansu Ciller saw agreement on promoting regional development through "major steps" in security and trade. Bilateral ties have been cool of late because of Kurdish separatist unrest in south-east Turkey. The government here openly accuses Iran of supporting rebels of the Kurdish Labour Party and giving them refuge. The same charge is made against Syria. Mr. Habibi announced fresh measures at the border, and Ms. Ciller said she hoped the joint frontier region would become one of peace."

Banned Kurds iodge appeal in Germany

BONN (AFP) - Lawyers for the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) and 35 other Kurdisb organisations banned in Germany a month ago said bere Tnesday they were lodging an appeal with the federal administrative court to have the banning orders overturned. The ban ordered by Interior Minister Manfred Kanther was "the continuation of the Turkish state's policy of oppression," argued lawyer Carl Heydenreich. With the ban affecting many cultural associations suspected of serving as a cover for the PKK, "the whole cultural and political life" of Kurds in Germany was being killed off, he said.

Mitterrand passes prostate cancer tests

PARIS (AFP) — Tests carried out on French President Francois Mitterrand, 77, for his prostate cancer showed "normal" results, a six-monthly medical bulletin said Tuesday. Ecographies and biological tests turned up no cancerous anomalies at local or general level, said the bulletin, signed by his personal physician,

israel, China agree long-term coal deal

TEL AVIV (R) - Israel is to huy coal from China under a long-term deal agreed last week, an Israeli energy official said on Tuesday. He said the deal called for annual shipments of up to 120,000 tonnes of steam coal from China. Israel would pay China between \$2.5 million and \$5 million a year for the coal.

UNITA rebels agree to return to peace talks

LUSAKA (R) - UNITA rebels said on Tuesday they would return to peace talks with the Angolan government after a U.N. military team reported on their charge that the Angolan government tried to kill their leader, Jonas Savimbi. "Todav, we will start our negotiations and we will have a session with the mediators and observers to discuss the political agenda and tomorrow we will go into the plenary session." UNITA spokesman Jorge Valentim told reporters:

Second Turk questioned in papai shooting

ROME (AFP) - Italian investigating magistrates carrying out a third probe into the 1981 shooting of Pope John Paul II by Turkish gunman Ali Agea have begun questioning a second Turkish suspect extradited from France last week. Judges Rosario Priore and Antonio Marini spent four hours at a Rome prison late Monday quizzing Oral Celik, who admitted belonging to the same extreme right-wing group as Agca, the Grey Wolves, legal sources reported. Agea, serving a life sentence for the Saint Peter's Square attack which wounded the Pope, has alleged that Celik was his accomplice.

Ethiopia-Sudan talks in Khartoum

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Sudan and Ethiopia have begun high level talks on cooperation between the two neighbouring countries. The Ethiopian side is headed by Prime Minister Tamrat Layne and the Sudanese by vice-president. Major-General Zubair Mohammad Salih, state-run television reported Monday night. The television said besides Gen. Zubeir, the Sudanese side to the talks which will end on Thursday includes the ministers in the energy, economic and services sectors besides politicians. Mr. Layne is accompanied by his ministers of foreign affairs, defence, finance, transport and communication, trade and investment, education and the commissioner of relief.

Moroccan foreign minister visits iran

NICOSIA (R) - Moroccan Foreign Minister Abdul Latif Filali arrived in Tehran on Tuesday, the most senior official from Morocco to visit since the Islamic revolution in 1979, the Iranian news agency IRNA said. Mr. Filali said on arrival that during the two-day visit he would discuss bilateral ties and exchange views on other issues with Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, IRNA added. Iran and Morocco resumed diplomatic ties in 1991 after a 10-year break. Relations were cut after King Hassan of Morocco took in his old friend the Shah of Iran, who had fled the 1979 revolution led by Ayatollah Rnhollah

iran says 26 escape from Iraqi camp

NICOSIA (R) - Twenty-six Iranian civilians seized by Iraqi troops at the outset of the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war escaped from an Iraqi camp last week and returned home, the Iranian news agency reported. It quoted the escapees, who crossed the border back into Iran on Monday, as saying the Iraqis were holding scores of Iranian families seized from border villages during the war. Hassan Sikkini said he and his family kidnapped from their village near the southern port of Khorramshahr and were held in several camps in Iraq during 13 years of captivity. He said the Iraqis gave them meagre food rations and for most of the time kept United Nations representatives from contacting them. IRNA said. The agency said the group of 26 escaped from Dojaila camp inkut province.

Cyprus government denies shooting report

NICOSIA (R) - The government of Cyprus strongly denied Tuesday allegations by Turkish Cypriots that Greek Cypriot soldiers fired across the buffer zone dividing Nicosia. "These allegations, which have been dismissed by the United Nations peacekeeping force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), are all imaginary, spokesman Yiannakis Cassoulides told journalists. Turkey's Anatolia news agency said Greek Cypriots fired three rounds from Nicosia central prison before dawn on Monday. Citing Turkish Cypriot officials, the agency also said that it was the fifth incident in the past few days. An UNFICYP spokesman told Reuters he was not aware of any shooting and that the force would investigate the reports.

Pope due in Lebanon, also wants to visit Holy Land

VATICAN CITY (Agencies)
— Pope John Paul II said Tuesday be will visit Lebanou in the spring and bopes also to visit the Holy Land.

The Pope announced his

travel plans in a year-end message to cardinals.
The trip to Lebanon bad

already been reported by Lebanese officials and bas been months in the planning stages with the return of relative calm following the 14-year civil war.

But a bombing Monday at the beadquarters of Lebanon's largest Christian political party that killed at least two people and wounded 130 was a reminder that bitter rivalries persist.

In his speech to the cardinals, the Pope recalled the suffering of that "tormented land." He stressed that his trip would be strictly religious and pastoral and that he hoped to meet with Muslims and Christ-

He said he wanted to make another trip to the Middle East to visit the main sites linked to the Christian faith. -

The Pope has accepted in principle an invitation by Israeli officials, but such a trip is apparently linked to the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel.

(Continued from page 1).

- Israelis and other non-

- Israel rejected a PLO

Palestinians would not be sub-

request for an international

presence at the border cros-

zhak Rabin indirectly con-

firmed the compromise. He

spoke of a Palestinian presence

at border crossings and sug-

gested Israel might comprom-

ise on the size of the Jericho

"It's a question of coordinat-

ing the Palestinian presence at border crossings, Mr. Rabin told reporters after a par-liamentary foreign affairs and

defence committee meeting.

Israel must bar entry to

those who can threaten Israeli

security and to Palestinians

who under Israeli law are not

allowed to resettle in their

homeland, said Mr. Rabin,

who is also defence minister.

Foreign Minister Peres last

week also spoke of a symbolic

Palestinian presence at the

borders, but the PLO bas

asked to at least bave joint

Mr. Rabin said during the

meeting that Israel would not

allow the Jericho region to

include the Almog and Elisha

settlements, or stretch as far as

the Dead Sea and the Jordan

Valley, a parliamentary source

He thus suggested that Israel

could broaden its initial plan

for Jericho by several dozen. kilometres of desert between

these areas, the source said.

Israeli officials said Mr.

Rabin has told Mr. Peres to

(Continued from page 1)

bers only a few days before

our Shura elections. Their

membership applications will

be studied and decided upon

in due time," said the IAF

tive committee members

three days before (the panel)

is legally obliged to dissolve

itself is meaningless," said the statement. "Statements

made at the meeting were

provocative but not insult-

ing," as Mr. Ahu Ghanimeh

had told the press on Mon-

"We regret the publication

of internal IAF differences in

the press. It is against party

regulations and Islamic mor-

als to air differences of opin-

ion in a public forum rather

than in our party meetings,"

added the statement referring

to the six members who dis-

tributed a statement to the

press Monday night announc-

new would-be members, said

the statement, had "not gone

through the proper channels"

and thus the committee

would not consider the ap-

But Mr. Abu Gbanimeh

said the holding of Shura

elections before the appli-

cants' membership was consi-

dered would be "undemocra-

"If elections are held be-

"Since the elections will be

held on Friday, our move was

fore this dilemma is resolved

more resignations follow," he

tic" and a "scandal."

plications at this stage.

The applications of the

ing their resignation.

"The resignation of execu-

control of the crossiogs.

Israeli Prime Minister Yit-

ject to Palestinian control.

Israel and PLO meet again

The Vatican on Monday confirmed that an historic agreement to forge such links will be signed Dec. 30 in occupied Jerusalem, although formal relations will still be sever-

al mooths away.
Pope Paul VI visited the Holy Land in 1964. Diplomatie sources say the

Pope and Israeli President Ezer Weizman will exchange personal envoys on Dec. 30. Full ambassadors will be appointed by the end of next In his address, the Pope said

be boped his trip to Lebanon, expected to take place at the end of May or the beginning of June, could belp the healing process begun three years ago after a devastating 15-year civil

"I bope, later, to be able to return to the Middle East, cradle of the three monotheistie religions — Judaism, Christianity and Islam ... " Pope

John Paul said Tuesday.
The 73-year-old pontiff said
he wanted to visit "all the principal sites" connected to the origins of Christianity as well as those linked to Old Testament figures such as Abraham.

This indicated the trip the

offer a series of "national"

estures such as the right to a

Palestinian flag, national

anthem and stamps.

Mr. Arafat had insisted on a

range of what Israel terms

'signs of sovereignty" when he

met Mr. Rabin in a bid to

break the deadlock in Cairo on

Dec. 12, but the prime minister

The premier met his delega-

tion Tuesday morning and

ruled out any concessions on "external security," Israel

"Israel will keep hold of

everything linked to security

needs along the borders. Once this is agreed there is room for

manoeuvre," a senior official who attended the briefing said.

Minister Jan Egeland said

Monday Israel and the PLO

were close to agreement on the

size of a Palestinian police

force that will replace Israeli

soldiers in the Gaza Strip and

countries, including Russia and

the United States, met in Oslo

to discuss the financing and the

structure of the police force, a

key element of the autonomy.

to be more focused on concrete

measures than the participants bad expected," Mr. Egeland

"In terms of numbes there is

Western donor countries

very little that divides the posi-

tions of the two parties, he

and the Middle East states

involved in the peace process

agreed to meet in Paris in the

second half of January to con-

more symbolie than strategie; it did not signal a rift," said

Deputy Hammam Said, one of the

six executive committee

members who resigned. Mr. Said one of 16 IAF

members in the Lower House

of parliament said: "There

are differences of opinion but

it has not come to 'serious

resignations; this is like a trial resignation. It was an apparent attempt to play

down a total rupture within

The IAF executive com-

mittee members who res-

igned were former Minister

of Health Kandil Shaker, de-

puties Said and Ahmad Kofa-

hi, Ali Otoum, Rajeh Kurdi

and Mr. Ghanimeh. They

represent the "old school" of

the Muslim Brotherhood that

"limits its accommodation

with the existing order," said

is too lax in opposing the

peace process," said one

The "rejectionists" were

voted down when they prop-

osed boycotting the election

in protest over the one-

person, one-vote amendment

introduced to the Election

Sources close to the IAF

executive committee said

Tuesday that three other

members of the committee

could resign prior to the hold-

ing of the last meeting of the

present Shura on Thursday.

IAF ranks are not met by the

existing leadership, then at

least three more people could

resign," said the source.

"If demands to expand

Law this summer.

source.

"The new IAF leadership

a source close to the IAF.

the party at this stage.

told the media.

added.

Resignations hit Islamic front

The conference turned out

Some 50 delegates from 16

Norway's Deputy Foreign

refused.

Jericho.

Radio reported.

Pope has in mind may be a

tries such as Egypt and Jordan The Pope gave no indication when that second trip to the Middle East would take place.

Lebanon's top Shiite Muslim fundamentalist cleric said on Tuesday the Vatican's plan to open full diplomatic ties with Israel was very dangerous and would strengthen the Jewish state and weaken the Arabs.

But Sbeikb Mobammad Hussein Fadlallah said Pope John Paul's scheduled visit to Lebanon next year would be welcome as long as he does not lock bimself In toternal Lebanese politics.
"We feel the danger of the

Vatican's recognition of Israel .. it gives moral strength to Israel, putting indirect press-ure on the Palestinian stand and weakening it," be said. Sbeikh Fadiallah told Reuters in an interview the Pope appeared to have come under pressure to recognise Israel hut that it was unexcusable to do

"The Vatican officially is the state of Jesus Christ. If Jesus Christ was present, would be have submitted to pressure?"

If he was present he would have confronted international oppressors and stood by the



Pope John Paul II

oppressed Palestinians in all of Palestine."

Sbeikh Fadlallah, who holds the Shiite Muslim religious rank of Ayatollah, said the recognition would bave negative repercussions on at least the feelings of Lebanese, Arabs and Muslims towards the Pope.
"We don't see the Pope's

visit as an extraordinary event but we see it as a good thing ... it would give a moral boost to the Lebanese climate if it is conducted in a balanced way," Sbeikh Fadlallah said.

He said the papal visit could create some internal problems as some Lebanese would try to capitalise on it to stir political and sectarian problems.

"We want the visit to be balanced ... because we don't want the Pope's visit to enter the small Lebanse political game," be said.

500 dead because of sanctions — Libya

TRIPOL1 (Agencies) -Almost 500 people, including 200 babies, have died because of the U.N. sanction imposed on Libya in April 1992, an official report said here Tues-

The report was issued on the fifth anniversary of the Pan Am Plane bombing over the Scottish village of Lockerbie. The U.N. air traffic embargo was the cause of many deaths because it complicates the

treatment abroad of seriously ill or injured people and delays the import of medicine, the report said:--

It said around 8,600 people were being deprived of urgent medical care outside Libya.

The sanctions have also pushed foreign workers to quit their jobs in Libya, said the report. On average, around 100 employees were deserting the health sector each month.

travel to and from Libya, have cost Libyan carriers more than \$510 million, according to the Agricultural output has fal-

len by 44 per cent, with \$234 million in lost earnings because of delays in imports of plants. fertilizers and other products to fight pests. Apart from the air embargo,

the U.N. Security Council in April 1992 also imposed diplomatic and arms sanctions. On Dec. 1, the Security Council tightened the sanctions, banning some equip-ment used in the oil industry: Libya's main source of revenue, and freezing part of its assets abroad.

The sanctions are aimed at forcing Libya Into handing over two suspects wanted in the West for the Lockerbie bombing of Dec. 21, 1988 that cost 270 lives.

British relatives of the victims of the blast asked Prime British Minister John Major on Tuesday to order an inquiry into the

In a letter to the Guardian oewspaper, one of the relatives, Martin Cadman, renewed an appeal made a year ago to Mr. Major to launch a public inquiry into the bombing of Flight 103.

Mr. Cadman, whose son was on the plane, said no substantial progress had been made towards establishing wbo planted the bomb on the Boeing 747.

He accused the government of foot-dragging and said relatives had been told some time ago by Cecil Parkinsoo, a former transport minister, that an ioquiry had been refused "at the highest level."

Mr. Cadman asked Mr. Major: "Can you tell us what is your problem? 270 people were killed in this bizarre tragedy. The government either knows all it needs to know and it will not tell (as a member of the U.S. presidential commission told one of us) or does nto know and does not want to know, which in unbelievable.

Mr. Major's office had no immediate comment on the let-

· But British media reports said this week Syria could have

been involved.
The Sunday Times newspaper and the British Broadcasting Corporation said electronic timers of the type used in the hombing could have found their way to Syrian-based guerrillas through the East German Stasi security police (see page

Christmas spirit flagging in Bethlehem

BETHLEHEM. Occupied West Bank (Agencies) - The mayor of Betblehem threatened Tuesday to cancel Christmas celebrations unless Israeli authorities backed down from a demand to remove a Palestinian flag outside city hall, municipal officials

The flag was raised at the municipality, on Manger Source, in the morning and Israel's military governor immediately ordered it taken down, the officials said.

"If they come and remove it, celebrations will be cancelled." a cify official quoted Mayor Elias Freij as saying.

Mr. Freij convened an emergency meeting of the city council to discuss the dispute. Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus, has been under Israeli military occupation since the 1967 war. The city, joyful at Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace talks, resumed Christmas celebrations this year after a six-year break because of an uprising against Israeli occupa-

"We thought this year is a special year because of the peace agreement, so we decided to put up the Palestinian flag," said Jamal Salman. secretary of the Bethlehem municipality.

Rumours immediately swept the town that celebrations would be cancelled hecause of the dispute, but Mr. Salman said they would proceed under any circumstances.

Flying Palestinian flags was grounds for arrest before the Sept. 13 autonomy accord. and the Israeli military authorities that run the West Bank said the ban remains for public institutions.

"Yes there is a declaration of principles between the PLO and Israel, but the area is still under the control of the military governor," said Major Elise Shazar, spokeswoman for the military.

Meanwhile the PLO, testing its wings despite the delay in implementing the autonomy accord, declared Christmas a national holiday for both Christians and Muslims.

"We the sons of the national movements, decided to transform this occasion into an extraordinary national event. We call on boy scouts to raise Palestinian flags and to play oational music to make the festivities a symbol for our struggle for independence." said a statement signed by the PLO's mainsream Fateh and two other factions.

On Tuesday shopkeepers in Bethlehem observed a general strike called by the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) in solidarity with Palestinians held in Israeli pris-

In Manger Square dozens of armed Israeli soldiers were busy building a stage to be used by church choirs. The square outside the Church of the Nativity has frequently been the site of clashes between Palestinians and Israeli

Clinton aide's son charged with drug sale

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (R) — The son of U.S. Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders, who earlier this month praised the idea of legalising drugs, has been charged with selling cocaine to an undercover officer, police said Monday. Kevin Elders, 28, "has been charged with one count of delivery of; eocaine," said Lieutenant! Charles Holladay of the Little Rock Police Department. If convicted on the charge, Kevin could serve 40 years to life in prison, Holladay told Reuters. A warrant for Elders' arrest was issued last week but he waited until Monday to turn himself in, police said. He was fingerprinted, photographed and released on a \$2,500 bond after being ordered to appear for a hearing on Feb. 22 in Little Rock Municipal Court, Lt. Holladay said. The police said Elders was charged with selling one-eighth of an ounce (3.5 grams) of cocaine to an undercover police officer for \$275 in cash. In interviews over the weekend, he had speculated that police were seeking his arrest to embarrass his mother politically. Police denied this. "He sold cocaine to an undercover officer who did oot know who he was. He received \$275 for that drug. It had nothing to do with politics." Lt. Holladay said.

NAACP comes to aid of Jackson

LOS ANGELES (R) - The NAACP came to the aid of beleaguered pop superstar Michael Jackson, roundly criticisiog press coverage of his misfortunes. Jackson has been accused in a civil lawsuit of sexually molesting a 13-yearold boy, and police are investigating the allegations to determine if criminal charges should be brought against the 35-yearold singer. Jackson recently returned to his Neverland Valley estate near Santa Barbara. about 240 kilometres north of Los Angeles, after receiving treatment for an addiction to painkilling drugs at an undisclosed location in Europe. Jackson admitted his addiction in a videotaped statement after abruptly cancelling bis world concert tour while in Mexico City and flying to Europe with bis close friend Elizabeth Taylor. Jackson's woes have made headlines around the world. On Monday, Shannon Reeves, the western region' director of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), accused the press of trying and convicting the entertainer before he has had his day in court. "We understand that the allegations facing Michael Jackson are serious. However, the NAACP western region takes no position on Mr. Jackson's innocence or guilt in this matter. Our primary concern is that Mr. Jackson is being tried and coovicted in the press," the civil rights leader told a news conference. He said that if Jackson was criminally charged, he would be tried "ix a court room not a news-1 room," by an elected or appointed indge "and not by a television news anchorman."-

Trump weds Maples

NEW YORK (Agencies) — Real estate magnate and casino operator. Donald Trump married actress Marla Maples in a lavish Plaza Hotel ceremony Monday night attended hy 1,000 guests including celebrities from the worlds of film, music, sports and politics. Trump, 47, announced just eight days ago that he would marry Maples, 29, a dancer and singer and the mother of their 9-week-old daughter Tiffany, Trump, dressed in a black tuxedo, led his radiant new wife down the stairs of the hotel's grand ballroom after the ceremony and posed playfully for photographers, kissing her on the lips as he dipped her close to the ground. Maples wore a flowing white gown by Carolina Herrera, with a \$2 million 350-diamond tucked into her bridal veil. The tiara was lent for the evening by ieweller Harry Winston: Asked if the couple planned to have more children, Maples. clutching a bouquet of purple flowers, merely rolled her eyes, while Trump nodded and, said, "probably so," "It's wonderful, it was just a relief," said Trump, who has three young children from his first wife Ivana. "It's been a. memorable evening."

New York FBI chief suspended for remarks on bombing trial

WASHINGTON (AP) -Federal Bureau of lovestigation (FB1) Director Louis Freeh suspended the top FBI agent in New York City for talking in a television interview about the World Trade Centre bombing while the trial is going

on, the hureau said Tuesday. James Fox, the assistant director in charge of the New York office, was suspended Dec. 10 for comments made on the Dec. 4 broadcast of "II News Close-up" on television station WPIX, an FBI official said, speaking on condition of

anonymity. . In the broadcast interview, Mr. Fox responded to a question about reports that FBI informant Emad Salem gave the FBI information prior to the World Trade Centre bombing on Feb. 26.

"He (Salem) gave us nothing. No one gave us anything," Mr. Fox was quoted by Newsday as saying. "If we had information, we would have prevented the bombiog." Mr. Fox became an agent in

York office for six years. He had been scheduled to retire Jan. 3, the FBI said. "Director Freeh made the decision to place Assistant Director Fox on administrative

feave with pay until his retire-

1962 and has headed the New

ment in January," FBI spokes-man John Collingwood said Tuesday, reading an official statement.

"He did so after carefully reviewing inappropriate public comments Fox made about pending prosecution," he said, adding that he was "not at liberty to say" how Mr. Freeh became aware of Mr. Fox's

The suspension was reported first by New York Newsday in Tuesday's editions. "Our policy is not to talk

about pending cases, particularly when it's still at trial," said the FBI official, Taped conversations

Transcripts of conversations between a defendant in the World Trade Centre bombing case and a man prosecutors say is a fugitive in the attack likely will be played for a jury.

The lawyer for Ahmad Ajaj, 27, of Houston urged Judge Kevin Duffy to reject the tapes because prosecutors did not turn them over to the defence before the Sept. 14 start of the trial. Ajaj is one of four people on trial in the blast.

Mr. Duffy said Monday he was inclined to let the jury read transcripts of the conversations. He said he would issue a

During a hearing Monday, Mr. Campriello objected to the jail house conversations between Mr. Ajaj and Ramzi Yousef, 26, the fugitive.

The government says the talks were taped between 1992 and last April, when Mr. Yonsef visited Mr. Ajaj in jail. The two came to the United

States together on Sept. 1, 1992, but Mr. Ajaj was stopped by U.S. customs agents because he carried a faise pass-He was in jail from then through Feb. 26, when the

bomb exploded at the trade centre, killing six people and injuring more than 1.000. Mr. Yousef, who fled the United States the day of the explosion. has been accused of ordering chemicals to make the bomb. Assistant U.S. Attorney Gil-

more Childers says Mr. Ajaj arrived in this country with the formula for the bomb, including manuals, videotapes and cassette tapes.

"The government doesn't have a legally sufficient case against Mr. Ajaj, and what they are trying to do is...to take an innuendo there and parlay that into evidence against bim," Mr. Campreillo told Mr. Duffy on a day when the jury was not in court.

